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Maritime Sculpture in Context: Ship Models in Scottish Churches

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Abstract

This research presents a chronological study of the ship models currently to be found in Scottish churches. By investigating surviving models, examining references to models now lost, and a comparison with ship models in other European churches, this research places the Scottish church ship models in a maritime and art historical context. Through a chronological study of the geographical spread of the practice of displaying ship models in Scottish churches and by examining the folklore associated with the models within the context of the church community, this research explores the societies and individuals that commissioned these unique forms of maritime sculpture and seeks to understand what purpose they had for those individuals and communities. This research assesses the ways in which interpretation of ship models in churches has developed and how the historical value placed on them has changed. The appendix includes a catalogue of all the ship models found in this study, along with photographs, dimensions and additional information.

This research seeks to answer the following questions:

Where are there ship models in Scottish churches, and what do they represent? What was their significance for their churches and communities when they were installed and what do they mean for those communities today? What can they tell us about Scottish maritime culture, trade, and art in the context of the church since the Reformation? This research combines art history, maritime history and ecclesiastical history in Scotland to form a more complete picture of these models and what they can tell us about the history of seafaring and the Scottish church.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

The storm threatens to wreck the ship of the church; and hence it is that I, a timid sailor, cry out, 'Keep watch, for the water has already made its entrance into the vessel, and the ship is in jeopardy'

Columbanus, c.612AD¹

Although extensive surveys of ship models in churches have been undertaken around the coasts of Northern Europe over many decades in the twentieth century, no systematic attempt has previously been made to survey and examine the Scottish church models. This research has undertaken a review of church ship models, their makers and locations around Scotland, and their social and church contexts, which will facilitate comparison with their wider British and European counterparts. This research began in the collections of Aberdeen Maritime Museum, in the North East of Scotland, where there are currently four models with antecedents in the churches of the city. Three of these models were made by the same sculptor in the early nineteenth century, but the fourth is much older, dating from 1689. Initial research into these models turned up references to two others in the area; one a full-sized replica fishing boat of 4.5m length, and another still hanging in its church, in a small coastal hamlet a few miles further south. Despite having visited churches and cathedrals around Britain of all denominations for decades, this author had not previously come across the practice of hanging ship models in churches and became intrigued that there should apparently be so many in this relatively small coastal community. Who had made these models, how had they come to be displayed in these churches and why? Was this a localised tradition common to the North East of Scotland, found only in certain denominations, and what purpose did they serve their communities? Aberdeen Maritime Museum's explanatory text at that time described the models as votive offerings given to fulfil a vow to God made during a traumatic sea journey, and yet the churches themselves recorded different stories including a donation for the opening of a new church, a celebration of the local fishing industry, and the wedding of a minister's daughter. Only one model was recorded as having been given in thanks for salvation from a storm,

¹Rev. J. A. Wylie, *History of the Scottish Nation*, 2 (London: Hamilton, 1886).

and that, at Portlethen Parish Church, was described as having been gifted to the minister as thanks for his personal help rather than in response to divine intervention; furthermore, an examination of official records did not provide evidence to support the storm narrative for this model. The oldest of the Aberdeen models has links to the Aberdeen Shipmasters Society of the seventeenth century, and their status in the newly reconfigured church space at the largest church in the new town. From this first cursory research into the subject it appeared that ship models in sacred spaces, such as churches and tombs, have been a continuous human response from the earliest navigators onwards, and that the ship models around Aberdeen demonstrated a wide spectrum of roles for their communities; potentially votive, devotional, celebratory, commemorative, and symbolic of cultural and civic status. Their origins appeared to be mostly local, but at least one, the oldest, was foreign-made; what might this tell us about international trade, Scottish churches and their local community? Could any be described as truly votive in function? These questions were the antecedents of this thesis.

Crossing large bodies of water is inherently dangerous. To go to sea is a transgression of natural boundaries, beyond which humans should not go. To break these laws of nature is to tempt disaster in the form of storms, shipwreck and drowning. Despite this danger, the earliest human civilisations scraped and carved out rough boats in order to travel across rivers, seas and oceans. The temptations of discovery, the wealth to be made from trade, the lure of *plus ultra*, more beyond, were enough to make the transgressions worth the risk.² Water is also the element of life, and as such is universally represented as a sacred motif in all the major world religions.³ Equally, bounty from the seas, lakes and rivers has sustained communities around the globe since the first hunter-gatherers. This irresistible, necessary, pull towards the water and the potentially terrible consequences of it have occupied the thoughts and prayers of those communities and resulted in measures to mitigate those risks by pleading with

² H. Blumenberg, *Shipwreck with Spectator - paradigm of a metaphor for existence*, trans. Steven Rendall (MIT, 1997).

³ T. Oestigaard, *Water and World Religions: an introduction* (Bergen: SFU & SMR, University of Bergen, Norway, 2005).

deities to intercede to ensure safe passage.⁴ Therefore the practice of hanging or displaying model ships in sacred spaces or incorporating the symbolism of the ship into religious acts has a long, almost ubiquitous presence in human history. Not least since the time of the highly ritualised burials in ancient Egypt, which included fully-rigged models of boats complete with crew and supplies to accompany the departing soul to the afterlife, so every seafaring or navigating people have incorporated ships and boats into their religious iconography.⁵ In the Christian tradition, water is even the medium through which Christians enter the faith at baptism. Indeed, Fr. R.W.H Miller, Roman Catholic priest and maritime social historian, described ship models in his history of the church and the merchant seafarer as 'ancient and universal.'⁶ As described by Morton Nance, 'the growth of the ship-modeller's art [...] had its first beginnings in rites, half magical, half religious, by which man sought to control his fate, or groped his way towards a working theory of the universe, and is probably as old as the art of navigation itself.'⁷

The Ichthys 'fish' symbol was used by the early Christians to represent Christ and as a signifier to identify other members of their church. As Christianity spread across Europe, carried by 'sea apostles'⁸ northwards across great waters, the ship became a signifier of Christ, the universal Church and a symbol for the local community within the church. The ship also became a useful metaphor in Christian literature. In the Bible, stories of the survival of Noah from the deluge, of Jesus calming the stormy Sea of Galilee, and Psalm 107, plus many other examples, all make it clear that God controls the destiny of those on the sea. This easy translation of the lived maritime experience with religious instructions is used time again, through the miracles worked by saints and by the early Christian writers, to explain Christian teachings and make them real for their congregations. The image of the ship in paintings of saints from all corners of the early Christian world would have been immediately recognisable and com-

⁴ Blumenberg, *Shipwreck with Spectator*, p.11.

⁵ "Maritime Ex-Votos in the World, from Antiquity to Our Days", International Council of Maritime Museums, *ICMM 4th Conference Proceedings 1981* (Paris, France), p.29.

⁶ R. W. H. Miller, *One Firm Anchor: the Church and the merchant seafarer, an introductory history* (Cambridge: Lutterworth, 2012), p.53.

⁷ R. Morton Nance, *Sailing-ship Models: a selection from European and American collections*, 2nd ed. (Halton & Co. Ltd, 1949), p.14.

⁸ Miller, *One Firm Anchor*, p.13.

prehensible for a pre-literate maritime society. As Miller asserts about the early church leaders' writings, 'the maritime metaphors of the Fathers derive as much from their classical education, common experience, and the Bible, as from a knowledge of ship-ping.'⁹

This influence can be seen in Northern Europe from at least the ninth century onwards as pagan Viking art reflects their gradual conversion to Christianity, for example on the Hedeby coins which depict two types of Viking era ships, which may have been intended to express a Christian message with the ship representing the Church, and the fish symbolising the Christian faith.¹⁰ The stave church at Urnes, Norway's oldest surviving church, dating from the 12th century, was constructed using shipbuilding technology, and the candleholder on the altar is a perfect miniature Viking ship, complete with dragon figurehead. The image of the ship also appears frequently in late medieval church graffiti,¹¹ as well as painted tablets, stained glass windows and other forms of decorative arts in churches and cathedrals throughout Britain from the earliest times. However, the church ship model is more than merely a passive image, a symbol or signifier. As a physical entity it was also an active part of the ritual of the church. The act of presenting a model ship to a church or sacred site ex-voto, in fulfilment of a vow made to God, frequently in the case of ship ex-votos a vow made during a turbulent sea passage, can be seen in Catholic churches from the Mediterranean Sea northwards. There are references to wax ship ex-voto models in German churches in the twelfth century.¹² Indeed, the oldest surviving European ship models, the Mataró model in Rotterdam Maritime Museum and the Ebersdorf model in its church in Germany, both date from between 1400 and 1450 and, whether or not they were originally made for display in churches, their ultimate survival was due to their being preserved in that context.¹³ These models will be considered in more detail in Chapter 2.

⁹ Miller, *One Firm Anchor*, p.25.

¹⁰ J. Graham-Campbell, *Viking Art* (New York, NY: Thames & Hudson, 2013), p.63,

¹¹ V. Pritchard, *English Medieval Graffiti* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1967), p.170.

¹² Nance, *Sailing-ship Models*, p.16.

¹³ A. E. Christensen and Wolfgang Steusloff, *Das Ebersdorfer Schiffsmodell von 1400: ein authentisches Sachzeugnis des spätmittelalterlichen Schiffbaus in Nordeuropa = The Ebersdorf ship model of 1400: an authentic example of Late Medieval shipbuilding in Northern Europe* (Bremerhaven: Deutsches Schiffahrtsmuseum, Oceanum, 2012), p.7.

The presenting of ship models as votive offerings was not seemingly restricted to wealthy church patrons. Although there are often references to models being made of precious materials, such as silver, or of having their hulls filled with gold coins, there are also written records of ship models made of wood and wax being left as offerings at the popular medieval shrine at the Chapel of St Anne in the Wood, near Bristol.¹⁴ William Wyrcestre, who wrote an account of visiting the chapel in 1480, describes five ships made of silver and used for burning incense, but also 32 'ships and little ships were hing [sic] up in the Chapel.'¹⁵ This shrine and its chapel, along with its contents, did not survive the Reformation of the following century, in which such personal intercessions were viewed as blasphemous.

However, the practice of hanging and displaying ship models in churches per se survived the Reformation, and indeed, as shall be demonstrated by this research, it may be said to have flourished in the newly instituted churches and communities around the coastlines of Northern Europe, not least in Scotland's seafaring communities, and is a tradition that continues to this day. These post-Reformation era models may often be incorrectly referred to as votive ships. Indeed, the term is widely misused; at a 2014 sale of over 170 ship models at Christie's auction house in Paris, a number of models were described in the catalogue as 'in the spirit of' or 'in the taste of ex-voto work',¹⁶ which were confirmed by the sales room staff to have had no evidence or provenance to link these models to churches or sacred sites. The term was used rather to denote amateur model work. For the purposes of this research, the more accurate designation 'church ships' will be used, unless the votive function can be reasonably assumed or verified.

This thesis seeks to establish a background for the Scottish church ship models, and place them in the context of the older votive models, tracing through their production and display the practices of model makers and patrons. Who made these models and for what purpose? Was the practice more common in some coastal com-

¹⁴ "Antiquities of Bristow in the Middle Centuries; including the topography by William Wyrcestre, and the life of William Canynge [electronic resource]," Mirror Office, 1834.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁶ D. Delalande, "Collection Verite Maquettes de Bateaux, Paris, Mardi 24 Juni 2014," ed. Christie's (England: Christie, Manson Woods Ltd., 2014), p.47.

munities than in others, and why, after the iconoclasm of the Reformation period, were models of ships deemed acceptable in some churches, when so many other pre-Reformation art forms were prohibited? This research combines art history, maritime history and ecclesiastical history to form a more complete picture of these models and what they can tell us about the history of seafaring and the Scottish Church.

1.1 Previous Research and Literature on Church Ship Models

The literature relating to this topic can be summarised in four inter-related themes: church history, maritime history, model making and social history.

The church history literature is split between small publications produced by each church in which the members write their own stories of their church's foundation, notable events, people, dates of renovations and lists of ministers, and larger formally published books, usually about the town or city. The self-published histories are often little more than photocopied and stapled pages of A4, but they contain the essence of what each church values about its own history, and reflect the stories they tell about themselves. Often, they repeat stories from larger published works, with or without referencing those sources. As will be seen later in this thesis, stories about what the ship models are, their names, makers, dates, are frequently quite wildly incorrect, but the stories are repeated unchallenged sometimes for decades, until a curious researcher looks at them more closely. The kirk session minute books are rarely of any help to the ship model historian, as shall be discussed in Chapter 4, and so folklore surrounds the histories of the models, propagated by the self-published church histories.

If we can describe the small self-published church histories as informal histories, then the formal published histories are usually about the wider history of the place, the region, town or city in which that church is located. These are useful, in particular the Statistical Accounts, in giving the researcher a broader view of what was happening in the communities of each church. They also include the significant developments in church history such as the Reformation in Scotland and its impact on peo-

ple's lives,¹⁷ Iconoclasm and Reform,¹⁸ the Disruption of 1843,¹⁹ and the lives of some of the significant church leaders, such as Dr. Kidd of Aberdeen.²⁰ In church histories are also included histories of art in churches,²¹ as well as changes in religious practices and what they meant for community and identity,²² and religious symbolism,²³ which is where church history overlaps with what might be broadly termed social history. Many of the churches were home to maritime benevolent societies, with the published histories of these organisations representing a connection between the history of the church and the maritime communities,²⁴ between local history, economic history, maritime history and the history of wider cultural practices. When considering the models in isolation, as objects of maritime sculpture outwith their church context, the literature on ship models, museum catalogues and model making overlaps with the history of folk-art appreciation rather than the history of scientific models. Unlike the scientific models of the eighteenth century onwards, as discussed by Chadarevian, Schaffer²⁵ et al, these models are not solely concerned with accuracy and detail, or even scientific progress or ingenuity, but rather with a connection to the viewer. Although, as Chadarevian states 'three dimensional models always embodied and displayed knowledge,'²⁶

¹⁷ M. Todd, *The Culture of Protestantism in Early Modern Scotland* (New Haven; London: Yale University Press, 2002).

¹⁸ J. Kirk, "Iconoclasm and Reform," *Records of the Scottish Church History Society*, 24, no.3 (1992).

¹⁹ A. A. MacLaren, "Religion and Social Class: the disruption years in Aberdeen," (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1974).

²⁰ J. D. D. Stark, *Dr. Kidd of Aberdeen. A picture of religious life in by-gone days*, 2nd ed. (Aberdeen: D. Wyllie & Son, 1893); A. Gammie, *The Churches of Aberdeen, historical and descriptive* (Aberdeen: Aberdeen Daily Journal, 1909).

²¹ D. Morgan, *The Sacred Gaze: religious visual culture in theory and practice* (Berkeley CA; London: University of California Press, 2005), table of contents <http://www.loc.gov/catdir/toc/ecip0419/2004013929.html>

²² J. Porter, *After Columba, after Calvin: community and identity in the religious traditions of North East Scotland* (Aberdeen: Elphinstone Institute, University of Aberdeen, 2002).

²³ Miller, *One Firm Anchor*.

²⁴ A. Clark, *A Short History of the Shipmaster Society or The Seamen's Box of Aberdeen* (Aberdeen: William Smith & Sons, 1911); Thomas of Borrowstounness Johnston, *The Records of an Ancient Friendly Society: the Bo'ness United General Sea Box. Two centuries and a half of local history* [reprinted from the *Falkirk Herald*.] (Bo'ness: Proprietors of the *Falkirk Herald*, reprinted from the *Linlithgowshire Gazette*, 1934, 1890).

²⁵ S. de Chadarevian and N. Hopwood, *Models: the third dimension of science* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2004), chapter 4: Fish and Ships: Models in the Age of Reason, S. Schaffer, pp.71-90.

²⁶ Chadarevian and Hopwood, *Models*, p.3.

in the case of church ship models their significance comes from their ability to symbolise a community. The ship model represents a 'communal existence...something both concretely experienced and shared at a distance and over time.'²⁷ Community, for the purposes of this research, is as Cohen describes, 'a mental construct' which 'exists in the minds of its members.'²⁸ The power of the symbol to its community lies in its 'commonality' – and the success of the ship model is in its ability to represent all sailors, all sea-farers, traders, and all Christians across time and space. Symbols are effective because they are imprecise; their meaning is subjective, they are the 'ideal media through which people can speak a common language,'²⁹ and which 'continuously transforms the reality of difference into the appearance of similarity with such efficacy that people can still invest the 'community' with ideological integrity.'³⁰

Whilst there has been a great deal of academic research on the church ship models around the Baltic coast and in Scandinavia,³¹ there is very little written about British church ship models, and less on the Scottish church ship models. The European literature mainly considers models in terms of their construction, accuracy of execution and to a lesser extent their role within their representative communities, with less interest taken in their broader art historical contexts. To date, literature in English on British church ship models is limited to Basil Harley's 78-page book, *Church Ships*, a handbook of votive and commemorative models.³² Harley gives a description of many of the different types of votive, commemorative and decorative ship models to be found in British churches. These are sorted and described approximately according to types, with chapters on Votive Ships, Missionary ships and Lifeboats, Historic Ships Commemorated and Trading and Fishing Boats. Harley was an engineer by training and a keen amateur ship model maker. His writing is a useful starting point for a survey of ship models surviving in British churches and museums, but he, like other ship model writers such as Nance and Chatterton, does not attempt to put them into any greater

²⁷ Morgan, *The Sacred Gaze*, p.58.

²⁸ A.P. Cohen, *The Symbolic Construction of Community* (London: Ellis Horwood, 1985), p.98.

²⁹ Cohen, *Symbolic Construction*, p.21.

³⁰ *Ibid.*

³¹ See Steusloff; Szymanski, *Schiffsmodelle in Niedersaechsischen Kirchen* (Goettingen, Germany: Verlag Otto Schwartz Co., 1966); Henningsen; et al

³² B. Harley, *Church Ships: a Handbook of Votive and Commemorative Models* (Norwich: Canterbury Press, 1994).

art historical or indeed wider cultural or historical contexts. The folklore that has built up around many of these models is recorded unchallenged and unexamined by Harley. Usually this relates to stories about the donors and also inaccurate recordings of vessel names, types and descriptions and misidentifications by the host churches. Harley gathers light-touch research information from a number of British churches and some museum collections. He also includes all other ship motifs in churches, such as weathervanes, pulpits, silverware and other decorations which happen to be in the form of a ship or boat.

The majority of books written in English about ship models are concerned with the model maker's art. That is the manner in which these models have been constructed, key differences in types of models and their accuracy in relation to the full-sized vessels they are intended to represent. Lavery and Stephen's excellent book provides an account of ship modelmaking from 1650 to the present day,³³ and gives a useful insight into tools and techniques, in particular as they relate to scale models, such as the Navy Board models of the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Lavery and Stephens rightly assert that ship models were used by maritime historians in the early twentieth century as their most important source to write the history of the ship, 'conversely, books that purported to be about ship models were really histories of the ship, using models as illustrations.'³⁴ This is true of two of the seminal books on the history of ship models; Robert Morton Nance's *'Sailing Ship Models'* (1924),³⁵ and Edward Keble Chatterton's *'Sailing Models Ancient and Modern'* (1934),³⁶ both give comprehensive accounts of all types of sailing ship models in private and public collections. For Nance, an artist, nautical archaeologist, founder of the Society of Nautical Research and prolific writer on maritime history, the ship reflects the styles and tastes of the people who built them. He sees ships as the 'sea-expression' of the ideals, social and artistic, of that age.³⁷ He likens the shapes and forms of contemporary ship's rigging and hull lines to the fashions and costumes of the period. Nance finds indications of

³³ B. Lavery and S. Stephens, *Ship Models: their purpose and development from 1650 to the present* (London: Zwemmer, 1995).

³⁴ *Ibid.*, p.15.

³⁵ Nance, *Sailing-ship Models*.

³⁶ E. K. Chatterton, "Ship-models," (London: The Studio, 1923).

³⁷ Nance, *Sailing-ship Models*, p.9.

ex-voto church ships in the fifteenth century Flemish engraver, W.A.'s drawing of a 'kraeck,' evidenced by the shape of the hull and lack of detail in the rigging, and cites examples of Dutch artists such as Bruegel who may have drawn from church ship models, and suggests 'the skill in ship-painting for which Dutch painters, beginning with Pieter Bruegel, gained so well-earned a fame was in part due to the ease with which they could find church-ship models to study.'³⁸ For illustrations of ex-voto models in situ, Nance points to Carpaccio's 'The Apparition of the Ten Thousand Martyrs' (c.1515), which shows models arrayed inside a church as the martyrs process in.³⁹ On the subject of British church ship models and those models in churches made after the Reformation, Nance appears to be dismissive. He writes:

In those countries that accepted the Reformation one might expect that ex-voto church-ships, as having been offered in gratitude, usually either to Our Lady or to St Nicholas, the sailors' patron, should have been condemned wholesale as 'superstitious,' and in England and Scotland this seems to have happened, for from that time we hear practically nothing of such models in these countries; but even this is doubtful, for in Lutheran countries, where the church-ship became commemorative rather than votive, as in Catholic countries where votive church-ships are still countenanced, although they remain as a traditional institution, we are no luckier in finding anything earlier than the 16th century, and very little that is as early.⁴⁰

He goes on to give an account of the South Leith church model, now in the National Museum of Scotland, which dates from 1590 and is traditionally associated with James VI and his safe return to Scotland with Anne of Denmark, as 'an extreme example of church-ship exaggeration, and the fact that it has been carefully rigged anew at the beginning of the 18th century hints that it was honoured as a church-ship even at that time.'⁴¹ Chatterton similarly dismisses post-Reformation era church ship models; in his description of the same South Leith church ship model, he does not mention its connection to the church at all. Chatterton's assertion that 'in Northern Europe hundreds of ex-voto fleets were swept out of existence'⁴² is all he has to say about church ship models. For Chatterton the predominant importance of ship models lies in their ability

³⁸ *Ibid.*, p.21.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, p.14.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, p.17.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, p.23.

⁴² E. K. Chatterton, *Sailing models ancient and modern* ([S.l.]: Hurst & Blackett, 1934), p.28.

to illustrate the history of naval architecture and thereby the history of human advancement and world events. He describes 'a pageant of shipping selected from the best contemporary models in Europe's public and private collections...a companion to any study of history.'⁴³ He is not as forgiving towards the re-rigging of historic models as Nance. Rather than see the repairs and alterations to older models as evidence of their continued importance to a community, Chatterton laments the loss of original detail, 'thus by unwarranted accretion have been added features which never belonged to that ship's lifetime; whilst, simultaneously, characteristic items of the past have ruthlessly been destroyed.'⁴⁴ However, unlike Nance, Chatterton does acknowledge the ship model's significance as a work of art in itself, rather than merely an artist's aid, albeit as an amateur's hobby: 'It would be hard to choose a hobby more delightful, employing mind, eyes and hands in making something that is at once a work of art and sums up the past most charmingly.'⁴⁵ Chatterton is interested in models from a model maker's perspective in much the same manner as the seventeenth-century ship model maker, Thomas Miller of Great Yarmouth, 'seaman and master in the art of raising the model' wrote in *The Compleat Modellist; shewing the true and exact way of raising the model of any ship or vessel, small or great, either in proportion, or out of proportion* (1676).⁴⁶ It is their contention that there are only correct or incorrect models. As Miller writes on the importance of practising the art of model making:

for you cannot be too perfect...or every one will be spending his verdict, as well he that knows nothing, as he that doth. Therefore to prevent all dangers, and to stop all mouths, I advise you once more to be very diligent in practicing your self, till you find that you are perfect in the work.⁴⁷

Chatterton came from a sailing and journalistic background and was writing for the burgeoning audience of amateur ship model makers in the first half of the twentieth

⁴³ *Ibid.*, p.18.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*

⁴⁶ T. Miller seaman, *The Compleat Modellist: shewing the true ... way of raising the model of any ship, ... also the manner how to find the length of every rope exactly, and tables which give the ... bigness of every rope in each vessel, etc* (London, 1676).

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, p.6.

century. He divides ship models into several classes: 'a/ old and contemporary, b/ modern representations of past ships, c/ new models of today's shipping.'⁴⁸ The last two he believes can be divided into sub categories: 'are they the 'show-case' sort, objects of beauty and instruction? or are they capable of being sailed?'⁴⁹ As with Nance there is no attempt to place models in historical, or cultural context or to address them as serious expressions of a popular art form. What becomes clear from the consensus in all of these writings, however, is that the practice of displaying ship models in churches can be said to have originated overseas, from continental Europe. Therefore, it is helpful to consider the literature available from other countries looking at the same tradition. There have been publications and research on this topic in Germany, Denmark, Sweden and the Netherlands;⁵⁰ however, very few have been translated into English. This research has focussed on those works either written or translated into German or English and where no English translation of a German text exists this author has made the translations. Hans Szymanski's 'Schiffsmodelle in Niedersächsischen Kirchen' [Ship Models in Lower Saxony Churches], published in 1966, is very much the forerunner of modern German research into church ship models. Szymanski was a Member of the Institute of Oceanography, Berlin, and a founder of Maritime Ethnology in Germany.⁵¹ In his work on the church ship models of Lower Saxony Szymanski begins with a chapter on the oldest ship models, then provides a brief summary of the ships he found in his survey of 1964, with results listed in a table arranged by headings: region, church (denomination), wooden ship models, metal weathervanes, other deco-

⁴⁸ Chatterton, *Sailing models ancient and modern*, p.18.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*

⁵⁰ See K. Kostlin and K. Detlev Sievers, "Eine Schiffsschenkung in Dölve 1877," *Kieler Blätter zur Volkskunde*, 1 (1969); Konrad Kostlin, "Schiffsschenkungen in Protestantischen Kirchen," *Deutsches Schifffahrtsarchiv*, 11 (1988); H. Henningsen, "Ship-Models in Danish Churches," *Mariner's Mirror*, 38, no. 4 (1952); H. Henningsen, "Interpretation of Mediterranean Ex-votos" (Paper Presented at the International Council of Maritime Museums, 4th Conference, Paris, 1981); H. Henningsen, *Votivschiffe in Koenigreich Daenemark und in den ehemaligen Herzogtümern Schleswig und Holstein* (Rendsburg: Verlag Heinrich Moeller Soehne GmbH & Co., 1988); H. Dessens, E. K. Spits and H. Eschauzier, *Schepen in het knein: geschiedenis en typologie van het Nederlandse scheepsmodel* (Amsterdam: Vereeniging Nederlandsch Historisch Scheepvaart Museum, 1998); J. M. G. van der Poel, *Scheepsmodellen in Nederlandse kerken* (Enkhuizen: Vereniging Vrienden van het Zuiderzeemuseum, 1987).

⁵¹ *Mariner's Mirror*, 55 no.3 (1969).

rations/fittings.⁵² Szymanski found 21 wooden ship models, twelve metal weathervanes and six other decorations and fittings in 31 churches in Lower Saxony. This synopsis is followed by an inventory of each individual church and its models arranged alphabetically by the name of the town or village. Black and white plates illustrating the models follow as an appendix.

Among the relevant recent literature on the topic is work by another German academic, Professor Wolfgang Steusloff of the Department of European Ethnology at Rostock University, who from 1976 to 1979 undertook an extensive survey of church ship models along the Baltic coast in Germany between Wismarbucht and Oderhaff.⁵³ In 27 Churches he found 70 models, 47 of which were aged between four and 250 years old. His subsequently published research also includes photographic and a socio-cultural analysis of the circumstances regarding how and why the ships were created. In addition to speaking to the local church communities and gathering information about the background of the model builders, Steusloff gathered information about their donors. In this, and his later publications on the models of Mecklenburg-Vorpommern,⁵⁴ and the Ebersdorf model,⁵⁵ Steusloff continued the work of previous generations of Northern European academics, particularly German, Dutch and Scandinavian researchers who have performed similar surveys. In the foreword to his 1981 publication, *Votive Schiffe; Schiffsmodele in Kirchen zwischen Wismarbucht und Oderhaff*⁵⁶ [*Votive Ships; ship models in churches between Wismarbucht and Oderhaff*], Steusloff credits those researchers who have gone before, in particular the folklore scientists of the 1920s who researched the customs of church ship models as evidence of the development of the cultural history of sea travel.⁵⁷ In his 2003 publication, *Kirchen-Schiffsmodele in Mecklenburg-Vorpommern* [*Church Ship Models in Mecklen-*

⁵² H. Szymanski, *Schiffsmodele in niedersaechsischen Kirchen* (Goettingen, Germany: Verlag Otto Schwartz Co., 1966), p.13.

⁵³ W. Steusloff, *Votivschiffe Schiffsmodele in Kirchen zwischen Wismarbucht und Oderhaff*, 1. Aufl. ed. (Rostock: Hinstorff Verl., 1981).

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵⁵ Christensen and Steusloff, *Das Ebersdorfer Schiffsmodele*.

⁵⁶ Steusloff, *Votivschiffe Schiffsmodele*.

⁵⁷ Steusloff, *Votive Schiffe*, 2nd edition 1990, p.5. See the works by A. Haas (1926); F. Balke (1927); W. Borchers (1931); R. Besch (1933); S. Gliewe (1936) on Pomeranian votive ships. J. van der Poels, *Ship Models in Dutch Churches* (1974).

burg-Vorpommern], Steusloff recorded 62 extant ship models and details of another 33 lost models. Steusloff gives a timeline by century for models and known ship types followed by a catalogue with photographs to illustrate each ship. The survey data includes date of build, type of construction, measurements, flags, inscription, ship's papers (by which he means any written records about the model in the church or archive), repairs and later alterations. This data is followed with stories known about the model, plus the model's location within the church. Since those original surveys, limited by the travel restrictions of the German Democratic Republic, Steusloff has expanded the geographical area of his surveys and with the research by other academics in Europe there is now a body of work and a solid basis of data about models in those regions with which to compare the British church ship models. In-depth published research into individual church ship models is reserved for only the very oldest examples of the genre. Namely the Mataró model, which has been the subject of extensive scientific analysis and research by Rotterdam Maritime Museum,⁵⁸ and the Ebersdorf model on which Arne Emil Christensen and Wolfgang Steusloff have also published.⁵⁹ These models are considered in more detail in Chapter 2 as examples of intercessionary offerings in the early European pre-Reformation church.

As part of the survey work of the church ship models it was necessary to attempt some identification as to the type of vessel depicted. In some instances, the model type had been misidentified and associations misattributed, for example the South Leith model was thought to be a French galleon associated with the mother of Mary Queen of Scots,⁶⁰ which on closer examination had the insignia of King Christian of Denmark on the transom. Publications that became invaluable for identification purposes included Deane's *Doctrine of Naval Architecture*,⁶¹ and the books of Lavery and Stephens;⁶² together with the online collections of Van de Velde drawings and

⁵⁸ "Mataro Model Online," Rotterdam Maritime Museum, accessed 7/08/2014, 2014, http://www.maritiemmuseum.nl/digitent/mataro/online/eng_mataronline.pdf (Exhibition and Research Publication).

⁵⁹ Christensen and Steusloff, *Das Ebersdorfer Schiffsmodell von 1400*.

⁶⁰ Chatterton, *Sailing models ancient and modern*, Figure 20; John Mason, *The History of Trinity House of Leith* (Glasgow: McKenzie Vincent & Co. Ltd, 1957), p.181.

⁶¹ Sir A. Deane and B. Lavery, *Deane's Doctrine of Naval Architecture, 1670* (London: Conway Maritime, 1981).

⁶² Lavery and Stephens, *Ship Models*, <https://www.rmg.co.uk/research-collections>

other collections available online from the National Maritime Museum Greenwich,⁶³ these were a useful way of comparing ships to aid dating and identification.

For the models of smaller fishing vessels, the *Mariners Almanacs* published in Aberdeen from 1895 to 1948 were extremely useful in identification when fathoming whether a model was intended as a particular actual boat, or was an imaginative creation.⁶⁴ These were accessed online from the Fishing Boat Heritage website and at the library of Aberdeen Maritime Museum.⁶⁵

1.2 Sources and Methods

1.2.1 Primary Sources

Surviving primary sources dating back to the fifteenth century for churches in Scotland are, for the most part, well maintained and accessible through local and national archives. However, unless the model in question formed part of a specific commemoration, there is little chance of them being mentioned in the official church records, more concerned as they are with births, marriages and deaths amongst their congregations and, of course moral misdemeanours, conflicts, seating arrangements, and the every-day financial business of running the church. The National Records of Scotland are the official place of deposit for the records, mostly minutes and accounts books and church inventories of the Church of Scotland's kirk sessions, presbyteries, synods and General Assembly with records dating back to the beginnings of the Reformation in the 1550s, as well as pre-Reformation records from the twelfth century. Historic Environment Scotland also owns and maintains some historic church buildings, such as Glasgow Cathedral, and has overseen the installation of a ship model there. Their records and the records from the object conservator responsible for the installation of the model bring the primary sources up to the modern day. Many of the models have associations to local Shipmaster Societies, or Sailor's Boxes, and where appropriate and possible this research has endeavoured to look at the associated minutes and records to find references to the models. Some kirk session minutes and benevolent society

⁶³ <https://collections.rmg.co.uk/>

⁶⁴ *The Mariner's Almanac and Tide Tables* (Aberdeen: Aberdeen Free Press, 1895-1948).

⁶⁵ <https://fishingboatheritage.co.uk/mariners-almanac/> (Accessed: 17/03/2019).

records are kept by their local archives, for example those at Aberdeen City Archive, Aberdeen University Special Collections, and Falkirk Community Archives Trust.

1.2.2 *Printed and Published Sources*

Individual churches very often have printed short, self-published materials outlining the history of the building and occasionally its role in the parish. Increasingly, this material is made available on the church's website. For the larger city-centre churches there are also usually histories of the city published over previous centuries, which are useful as they sometimes include interior descriptions helping to date models. The ecclesiastical history of Scotland is complex and fascinating and has therefore been the subject of much academic study, providing a solid basis for research on cultural and religious context for the models. In particular, the Statistical Accounts of Scotland Online⁶⁶ provides access to digitised and fully searchable versions of both the Old Statistical Account (1791-99) and the New Statistical Account (1834-45). These uniquely rich and detailed parish reports, written by Church of Scotland ministers, detail social conditions in Scotland and are a helpful resource for anyone interested in Scottish history.⁶⁷ Similarly, online access to historical newspapers is also an invaluable source of information on the life and activities of the church communities.⁶⁸ Historic Environment Scotland's two online resources are also helpful for researching church interiors; SCRAN (Scottish Cultural Resources and Archives Network),⁶⁹ which provides access to Scotland's culture, heritage and related material from museums, galleries and archives across Scotland, and their Canmore website, the online catalogue of material relating to archaeological sites, buildings, industry and maritime heritage in Scotland.⁷⁰ These websites were extremely helpful in tracking down churches with ship models and checking information about those churches. They were useful in conjunction with the Places of Worship in Scotland project by the Scottish Church Heritage Research group,

⁶⁶ "The Statistical Accounts of Scotland 1791-1845" (Edinburgh: Edina, 2005 -)
<http://stataccscot.edina.ac.uk/static/statacc/dist/home>.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*

⁶⁸ <https://www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk>

⁶⁹ Historic Environment Scotland, <https://www.scran.ac.uk>

⁷⁰ Canmore Archaeology Notes, National Record of the Historic Environment, Historic Environment Scotland. Available online: <https://canmore.org.uk>

which has been conducting inventories of Scottish churches since the 1980s.⁷¹ Their online database proved vital for tracing missing ship models and missing churches. Many of the shipmaster and mariner organisations have records held by National Records Scotland or can be found via the SCRAN database.

As this research has found that the models did not appear to form any part of the ritual of the churches in which they were displayed, it was also important to consider the lay-piety, the beliefs of the congregation, as separate from the formal liturgical practices of the church in order to gain some understanding of what these models meant to the donors, but also to the generations of church-goers and clergy that followed. There has been a great deal of research published on the social history of churches, folk-beliefs and superstitions both before and after the Reformation, which helped to inform an understanding of how these models operate outside the formal rituals and functions of the church.⁷²

1.2.3 *Methodology*

Clearly, in order to establish the possible meaning for each model, one must look deeper into the circumstances of each model, the church in which it was displayed, and, as far as possible, the motivations of the makers and donors, not only at the time of introduction to the church, but also to the subsequent generations who cared for and maintained the models. This required research into the specific local circumstances of each model and its setting, but also the wider cultural and religious significance for the church and the country. The majority of the models found by this research were made in the twentieth century, and some by model makers who are still alive and

⁷¹ <http://scottishchurches.org.uk>

⁷² K. Thomas, *Religion and the Decline of Magic: studies in popular beliefs in sixteenth and seventeenth century England* (Oxford University Press, 1971). <http://books.google.co.uk/books?id=yQwSAQAAIAAJ>; Todd, *Culture of Protestantism*; E. Duffy, *The Stripping of the Altars: traditional religion in England c.1400-c.1580* (Yale University Press, 1992); R. Marks, *Image and Devotion in Late Medieval England* (Stroud: Sutton, 2004); M. W. Cole and R. Zorach (eds.), *The Idol in the Age of Art: objects, devotions and the early modern world* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2009); K. Kamerick, *Popular Piety and Art in the late Middle Ages: image worship and idolatry in England 1350-1500* (New York: Palgrave, 2002); S. Kaspersen and U. Haastrup, *Images of Cult and Devotion: function and reception of Christian images in medieval and post-medieval Europe* (Copenhagen: Museum Tusculanum Press, 2004); D. G. Mullan, "Protestant Piety in early-Modern Scotland: letters, lives and covenants, 1650-1712," (Edinburgh: Scottish History Society, 2008).

active in their church communities. Wherever possible this author has spoken to the model makers, or those responsible for the model being in the church in order to confirm their reasons for offering the models and what they mean to their congregations. For many models, however, the model makers are unknown and the reasons for their donation to the church is unclear or the matter of local folklore. The reticence of model makers to be identified has origins in common with much early church art. Andreopoulos states that there are few named artists because 'the medieval artist did not feel they had to make their name known to the public that enjoyed their art [...] The role of the artist at the time was no different from the role of a craftsman...'.⁷³ Even later, after the Renaissance elevated the position of artists, model makers remained in the shadows, and 'they have generally been regarded as humble craftsmen, unlike artists or sculptors.'⁷⁴ The existing literature about ship models does not go so far as to put them within the realms of established art history narratives, connected as they are to trades and craftsmanship rather than the high art traditions of sculpture. As will be demonstrated, these models fit better within the descriptions of Folk Art, with what Kenny calls the 'collective voice'⁷⁵ and combine authenticity and nostalgia, found objects and folk rituals to embody 'popular piety' in coastal communities.⁷⁶ Some of the Scottish models survive now thanks to the protective care of museums, still functioning in a way as emblems of civic pride. This research also considers the post-church careers of those models and examines how they have been treated once taken out of their sacred spaces.

1.2.4 *Field research*

In attempting to put the Aberdeenshire models into a wider context it was necessary to look across Scotland, the UK, and then at links around northern Europe to see where these models occur and how they are the same or different to each other. In order to achieve this, several research visits were made to churches around Scotland and elsewhere to locate every known ship model in a Scottish church. These were

⁷³ A. Andreopoulos, *Art as Theology: from the postmodern to the medieval* (London: Equinox, 2006), p.65.

⁷⁴ Lavery and Stephens, *Ship Models*, p.35.

⁷⁵ R. Kenny, J. McMillan and M. Myrone, *British Folk Art* (London, England: Tate Publishing, 2014).

⁷⁶ Kamerick, *Popular piety and art in the late Middle Ages*.

guided by previous research, as well as writing an article on this research that was published in the Church of Scotland's magazine 'Life and Work' asking to hear from churches with models.⁷⁷ British and European maritime curators were approached via the UK Maritime Heritage Forum and Maritime Curator's Group, while the Association of North Sea Cities (now the Northern Seas Maritime Museum Network) was asked for information on models in museum collections that had come from churches or had the description 'votive'. These appeals yielded a great many contacts, paving the way for numerous visits to churches and archives across Scotland, England, Germany and the Netherlands. The maritime museum community were extremely generous with their time and help, sharing publications and research, and it was possible to accompany the curator of ship models from the National Maritime Museum in Greenwich on a visit to All Hallow's church in London at the beginning of this research, and to assist him with an inventory of models there. This established a procedure that was applied on subsequent field trips to churches in Scotland.

In conducting this research every church with a ship model was visited at least once, and at each church the model was photographed, and measurements were taken, either with a tape measure or using a digital measuring tool to calculate dimensions when it was not possible to get close enough to measure with a tape measure. Sketches were made of the layout of the church and the model's location. Talking to church ministers, as well as the laity, when visiting target churches helped gain an understanding of the role these models play for local communities and the sense of self for each church and its society. These conversations, letters and emails often led to other churches with models, and other sources of information, local publications or archives. In some instances, it was possible to talk or correspond with the model's maker and to ask questions about how the model was constructed and how it had come to be in the church.

1.2.5 *Some problems, challenges and exclusions to research*

Perhaps more than any other type of sculpture, ship models are uniquely prone to wear and tear. Regardless, and indeed sometimes because of, their size and construc-

⁷⁷ M. Greiling, "Sacred Vessels - A New Survey of Scotland's Church Ship Models," *Life and Work*, 2014.

tion, ship models are extremely vulnerable to damage. Like their full-size counterparts, ship models may appear sturdy, bulky even, but anyone who has attempted to move a model ship knows just how easy it can be to damage rigging, to snag masts and spars, to underestimate the weight and height of a model and accidentally break, drop or knock a model. This inevitably means that there are several accounts of models in churches that are now lost, probably destroyed, almost certainly due to some accident or incident. A small-scale model ship hanging in a prominent space in an otherwise austere church interior makes itself a tempting target for well-meaning and occasionally malicious interventions. There are accounts of boys throwing hymn books at a ship model hung in an Aberdeen church, for example, and causing damage that then had to be repaired at their parents' expense. Attempts at cleaning and repair work can often result in unintended damage, as well as subsequent efforts to correct these previous alterations. This research looks at the consequences of repairs and alterations made to one such seventeenth century model, and how generations of well-intentioned model-makers intervened to radically change the look of the model, and consequently its interpretation. Misidentification of ship models is common, with descriptions of the vessel's type and its name altering over generations, as stories and legends grow up around them, and they develop their own folklore. This multi-layering of stories and assertions about models means that their true origins require unpicking and often definitive answers can be difficult to find. Identifying model makers is especially difficult unless the maker and the donor are the same person. Sometimes the model carries the same name as the model maker, such as the William Gibb in Kincardine and the William Dunlop in Saltcoats. There are even examples of model maker's names being recorded on slips of paper hidden in the model's hull. However, these clues can only be discovered when a model is lowered and closely inspected, something that is not possible without a great deal of co-operation from the church, and as all handling risks damaging the models this is not to be encouraged unless the model needs to be taken down for another reason.

Even when the name of the model maker is known, his motivation for making the model is not always clear. Each model has a maker and a donor, and quite often this is one and the same, but reasons for making the model and the reasons for gifting

it to a church can be ascribed later by others. With all models there are problems inherent in poor repairs, reconstructions, misidentifications, anonymous model makers, and ascribing motivations of donors. Wherever possible this research has attempted to verify claims and narratives put forward by the churches that accommodate these models by looking at church minutes and contemporary newspaper accounts.

One of the principal problems with church ship models is access. The majority of the ship models in Scottish churches are hung from the ceiling, either in an aisle, between pillars, over lofted seating galleries, or behind the communion table, and occasionally on a high shelf. This makes physical access to these models extremely restricted and close inspection almost impossible. Naturally, due to the fragility of the models and the dangers inherent in moving them, as mentioned previously, church staff are reluctant to bring them down and so other arrangements have had to be made to see the models in detail. Fortunately, modern camera technology is now advanced enough to be able to take good quality photographs even from some distance and in low light levels. These, along with laser measuring tools enabled a reasonably thorough examination without risk to the models. In some instances educated assumptions about construction have had to be made, for example about method of construction and materials; however, wherever this has been necessary the reasons for the assumptions are made clear. The issue of material of construction is difficult even with hands-on access to a model, as invariably the models are painted and so identifying the type of wood used (and almost all are wooden) is largely a matter of observation of any unpainted areas, usually decks or inside the hull, or word of mouth from members of the church or conservator's reports. Without taking wood samples for analysis any more positive identification of wood types is impossible, and as this is necessarily destructive to the fabric of the model it is not a line of enquiry pursued in this research.

There are some exclusions to this research and models that have not been included in this thesis. For example, there are ship models in the Fishermen's Missions at Oban and Mallaig on the west coast of Scotland, that are not included in this thesis for the reason that the Mission centres are not churches. The Fishermen's Mission is a UK-wide Christian welfare organisation that seeks to help fishermen in need of emergency

care and financial support, as well as spiritual aid. Their centres provide welfare for shipwrecked fishermen and a vital community service for some of the remotest coastal communities in the British Isles. They do have rooms used for prayers and services, but they are not solely for this purpose. Indeed, the Fishermen's Mission is an active participant in the lives of fishermen and as such is more likely to lead prayers aboard ships, boats, at hospital beds or in private houses than at their centres. Model fishing boats have been gifted to the centres at Mallaig and Oban by fishermen in gratitude to the Mission, in remembrance of former fishermen, and to provide decoration to brighten the premises. Mostly the models were commissioned by the boat's owners, and in the majority of cases the donation to the Mission occurred many years after the original commission, usually after the death of the boat's owner, when the models have been considered too big to house by the next of kin. However, as the Mission centres are not consecrated or considered by the Mission to be churches or chapels, they are outwith the remit of this study. Similarly, another exclusion from this research are ship models hanging in houses. There are, for example, ship models in Culzean Castle in Ayr, and in *Through England on a Side Saddle*, Fiennes records a visit to Hitchingbrooke House, the home of the Earl of Sandwich who had died at sea during the Battle of Sole Bay against the Dutch in 1672. Fiennes writes that 'We enter a good Lofty hall, in it hangs the Ship in which he was lost, that is the representation of it Cut out in Little and all things Exactly made to it.'⁷⁸ This event is commemorated now in a stained-glass window at Hitchingbrooke House with the model long since removed. Although similar in style and intention as church ship model, as these models were not intended for display in sacred or church contexts they do not fall within the remit of this research.

Occasionally, as previously mentioned, models of a certain age and appearance may be given the designation 'votive model' without any evidence of the church connection. Two such models are housed in the collections of Glasgow Life at the Riverside Museum in Glasgow. A model of the Dutch frigate *Leef op Hoop* was acquired in the 1960s from a private individual, while the other, a large model called the *Royal*

⁷⁸ C. Fiennes, *Through England on a Side Saddle in the Time of William and Mary. Being the diary of C. F. With an introduction by the Hon. Mrs. Griffiths* (London: Field & Tuer, 1888).

William, is of the same ilk, but neither model has any proof or suggestion by way of provenance with which to connect it to a church or sacred offering.⁷⁹ The latter model may be that referred to in the 1957 museum catalogue;

Prince William (from the Spencer Collection) circa 1770. A 64-gun three-decker originally the *Guipuscoana* captured from the Spanish by Rodney (1780). She fought under Hood (1781) and at Cape St. Vincent (1785). The model which was made by a sailor dates from about 1780 and may have been intended as a votive model.⁸⁰

Uncertainty around these models' origins, in particular the lack of any certain church with which to associate them is the reason for their exclusion from this research. Conversely, this study has included those models that were formerly in churches but have since been removed to museums as their primary identity is that associated with its time in the church.

The ship as a decorative motif occurs frequently in churches, commonly as stained-glass windows depicting biblical scenes, as pieces of church paraphernalia such as nefs, pulpits shaped like the prow of a boat, and a font such as the one at St Conan's Kirk on the shores of Loch Awe in Argyll, which is in the form of the hull of a clinker-built ship similar to a medieval carrack. For the purposes of this research, however, only models that have no other use than as miniature representations of ships or boats shall be considered. This study is restricted to ship models that have no other function than to be representations of vessels, that is to say that their purpose is inherent in their form and they have no extra use such as candleholder, incense burner or pulpit. Their function may rather be said to be symbolic or ritualistic, representing not only religious metaphors, but also the cultural identity of the model makers, donors and the community of the church in which it belongs. In this sense then, it is not possible to consider these models in the context of formal, establishment art histories, but rather it is in the traditions and cultural landscape of folk art that we can place their relevance. As the literature covered in this research illustrates, the ship model sits within a practice of 'identity art.' Therefore, it is also important to consider their role in church

⁷⁹ Correspondence with E. Malcolm, Curator Transport and Technology, Glasgow Life.

⁸⁰ Anthony Spence Elphinstone Browning, *Descriptive Catalogue of Ship Models in the Glasgow Art Gallery and Museum [with plates]* (Kelvingrove Art Gallery, Glasgow, 1957).

communities and what their function was for the donors, the congregations which looked after them, and their wider communities.

1.2.6 *Geographical limits to research: Focus on the Scottish church*

The Scottish church has always been a separate entity from the established English church, with its own traditions and history. The church in Scotland, settled by early Gaelic monks from across the Irish sea, such as Columba, Machar and Ninian, always maintained its own identity and character. This was reflected in the lay piety of the congregations maintaining their own traditions and ritual habits even at those times of union between the two countries.⁸¹ This was as much a result of the difficulties in reaching some of the furthest regions of Scotland and the low density of the population in those parts that made influence and edicts from the English church almost impossible to enforce. The history of the Reformation in Scotland is markedly different from the way in which the division of church and state manifested itself in England.⁸² This is partly to do with the geographical spread of population and the language barriers inherent in doctrines being translated from Latin into English and then into Gaelic. Well into the seventeenth century, Scottish church records are rife with accounts of punishments being given for Papist transgressions, most often for observing saint's days and Yule day in particular.⁸³ Scotland's history as an independent nation, its attempts at establishing colonies, trade links and monarchy are all reflected in the spread of ship models in Scottish churches. In the nineteenth century, the Scottish church split, divided over who had the right to appoint ministers, which deepened 'a fracturing of religious identity'⁸⁴ caused by the upheaval of the Napoleonic wars and political radicalism, and resulted in new churches being built and existing churches renovated. These events in the Scottish church can be illustrated by the models lost and replaced in this period. The twentieth century was punctuated by the two world

⁸¹ W. McMillan, "Worship of the Scottish Reformed Church, 1550-1638" (Unpublished PhD Thesis, University of Edinburgh, 1925).

⁸² *Ibid.*

⁸³ Todd, *Culture of Protestantism*, p.183.

⁸⁴ D. J. Withrington, "The Idea of Religious Community at the Disruption," in J. Porter, ed., *After Columba, After Calvin: community and identity in the religious traditions of North East Scotland* (Aberdeen: Elphinstone Institute, University of Aberdeen, 2002), pp.125-33.

wars, and the technological and political developments of the century impacted enormously on the large maritime industries of fishing and shipbuilding. The loss of these dominant industries and the remembrance of war losses are also reflected in the ship models found from this period and into the twenty-first century. Whilst these themes may be reflected in the histories of some of England's and other nation's sea ports, the unique combination of the history of the Scottish church and maritime communities means that this thesis focuses on the ship models in Scottish churches.

1.3 *Contribution to Knowledge*

This research has found that ships play an important role in the imagery of the Scottish church, and that models of ships, although not as common as they are in the North European countries across the North Sea, are a recurring theme that have persisted in certain locations for centuries. This research has found 37 extant models in or from 26 churches around the coast of Scotland, and as far inland as Edinburgh, all dating from after the Reformation, spanning a period from 1590, with models given to churches until as recently as 2018.⁸⁵ Three models survive from the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, but none from the eighteenth century. There is only one model recorded from that century; a warship called *Bon Accord*, the motto of the city of Aberdeen, given to St Paul's Episcopalian chapel by the Aberdeen Shipmasters Society in 1739, but this model is now lost. There is a description of the fleet of lost ship models in Chapter 4.

This research has found that whilst the practice of hanging or displaying model ships in churches in Scotland has continued uninterrupted by the Reformation of the sixteenth century or the Disruption of the nineteenth century, the motives behind these gifts has nevertheless changed to reflect the different beliefs and social structures of their time. This is because in large part these models are all gifts. They have all been made for, and often by, members of the communities, the laity, of their host churches. Very few ship models in Scottish churches have an established connection to an event which one might call 'peril on the seas', and so be truly 'votive' in origin. The link between survival from shipwreck or near disaster at sea is however implicit, albeit

⁸⁵ "Church Records," National Records of Scotland, 2016, accessed 01/11/2016, <http://www.nrscotland.gov.uk/research/guides/church-records>

in a metaphorical and religious sense, for many of these models. The earliest recorded models, the majority of which no longer survive, represent a link between magic, the power of inanimate objects, and the church.⁸⁶ These may be seen in a true sense to be 'votive' models, made in fulfilment of a vow to God. They illustrate the importance of a pledge made under certain circumstances and the real power such objects held, representing as they did for the donors a bargain with God. By the time of the Reformation, and the drastic changes made to church interiors, still ship models were deemed permissible. Despite previous associations with magic and superstition, ship models reflected the modern world of trade and international connections. This, along with their relevance for the Christian message, as a metaphor for life in the Christian church, ensured that they became a popular form of civic expression for ship master's societies in the ultra-political realm of the church space. The Disruption of the Scottish church in the nineteenth century led to a boom in church building, and once again ship models became an acceptable accessory for a laity looking to assert themselves in the church space. The nineteenth-century models have the widest range of motives behind their donation, but most are celebrations, whether of new churches, marriages, and indeed survival from the Napoleonic wars. The twentieth and twenty-first century church interiors are dominated by commemorations of the two world wars, but they also memorialise the ends of important maritime industries such as shipbuilding and fishing, and this is reflected in the ship models from that period.

This thesis asserts that whilst the practice of hanging ship models in Scottish churches has not greatly changed over the centuries, the motivations and intentions behind each model have varied along with the church and its members. Although there may be far fewer church ship models in Scotland than in other countries it is a habit that Scotland has in common with all sea-faring nations around Europe. Ship models in Scottish churches have fulfilled many roles; from magical objects of sacred intervention, to the markers of civic status, objects of celebration, to mementoes of loss and war.

Each chapter of this thesis considers one period of Scottish church history through the prism of the ship models from that period; pre-Reformation, the Refor-

⁸⁶ Thomas, *Religion and the Decline of Magic*, p.777.

mation and the long seventeenth century, the nineteenth, twentieth and early decades of the twenty-first centuries. This chapter has established the background to, and aims of this research. Chapter 2 examines in more depth the role of the ship as Christian metaphor, ships models as intercessionary objects in the pre-Reformation churches of Europe, with case studies focussing on the two oldest ship models in Europe; the Mataró and Ebersdorf models. Chapter 3 considers the oldest Scottish church ship models, dating from the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries; that of King James VI's ship which was given to South Leith Parish church in 1590 as Scotland sought out its own religious identity, the *Unicorn* at Kinghorn Parish Church and the Dutch warship at Aberdeen's St Nicholas Kirk. This chapter considers the oldest Scottish ship models and explores the connection between them and Scotland's wider sense of identity after the Reformation, exploring trading links with Europe and the persistence of superstition. Chapter 4 examines church ship models from the nineteenth century and the ways in which they represent patronage and social cohesion in the church and in Scottish society. Chapter 5 looks at the development of the memorial models of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, how models continue to be used to create a sense of identity in churches for their communities and how repairs, replicas, alterations and replacements change the relationship of the model with the church and the laity.

The main conclusions of this research are presented in the final chapter which brings together the main themes and findings of this study and suggests areas of future research. An appendix includes a full catalogue of the models currently to be found in Scottish churches with illustrations and details about each model's construction.

Chapter 2: Shipwreck, Intercession and pre-Reformation Ship Models in the Early Church: Mataró and Ebersdorf

I exhort you to be of good cheer: for there shall be no loss of any man's life among you, but of the ship. For there stood by me this night the angel of God, whose I am, and whom I serve, saying, Fear not

The shipwreck of St Paul, Acts of the Apostles (Chapter 27: Verse 22)⁸⁷

The world is a sea in which the Church, like a ship, is beaten by the waves but not submerged

Hippolytus of Rome (c.170-236AD)⁸⁸

This chapter examines the role of ships and seafarers in early Christianity. It considers them as physical agents carrying the message of Christianity around Europe, and as a metaphor in the teachings of the early church. In this context the role of the ship model as an intercessionary object, conveying prayers from the earthly realm to proactive protective patron saints, is assessed. The chapter explores the ship in two of the earliest European church ship models, thereby appraising the pre-Reformation tradition so that we are better able to understand and situate the post-Reformation ship models in Scotland, which are discussed in the following chapters.

The argument presented in this chapter brings together previous research on the symbolic use of ships as a motif in early Christianity in church graffiti, pilgrim badges, and votive offerings, and builds on the work of Champion, Westerdahl, Friel, and others by considering the earliest surviving European ship models in this context. Previous studies by Christensen, Steusloff, and Rotterdam Maritime Museum have considered these early models in isolation from a maritime historical perspective, examining their construction and viability as ships, this chapter provides a broader reading to build an insight into their cultural significance by understanding their intended roles as votive offerings, as well as their importance for subsequent generations as demon-

⁸⁷ *Holy Bible: New Revised Standard Version, containing the Old and New Testaments with the Apocryphal/Deuterocanonical books*, Anglicized ed. (London: SPCK, 2008).

⁸⁸ R. W. H. Miller, "Sea, Ship and Seamen in Early Christian Literature," *Mariner's Mirror*, 96, no. 4 (2010).

strated by their place in folklore, art and poetry. By considering the roles of these early models this chapter provides context for the subsequent Scottish church ship models.

The spread of Christianity in Britain was entirely enabled by men in ships establishing a network of monasteries and churches from Ireland to the islands of Iona and Mull and then out around Scotland's coastal communities and south to the north east of England. For these early Christian teachers, Christ could be employed to represent both the sailor and the safe harbour, with the church acting as the ship designed to carry the soul of the believer safely through life to the eternal haven. These metaphors are common to the Bible and Christian teachings. The very real perils of those undertaking sea voyages give these metaphors particular power. The dangers inherent in sea travel are true at any point in time, but none more so than during the early medieval period, when early deep-sea sailing technology facilitated ever further voyages, and still more encounters with plague, warfare and piracy, all of which increased the dangers to travellers exponentially. Biblical passages relating to seafaring, and stories of saints performing miracles at sea, are reproduced and echoed in church paintings and objects of ritual significance and offerings. Paul's exhortation to be of good cheer and fearless at the head of this chapter is an example of a literal angelic intercession in the face of an impending shipwreck in the Mediterranean Sea. The story of Paul's voyage to Rome, his shipwreck and subsequent salvation from a storm at sea is the first written example of the power of divine maritime intercession in the New Testament by an agent other than Jesus himself. Paul's account is also one of the most historically detailed parts of the Bible,⁸⁹ due to Luke's informed descriptions of the ship, the weather conditions and the route taken:

Embarking on a ship of Adramyttium that was about to set sail to the ports along the coast of Asia, we put to sea...we sailed under the lee of Cyprus, because the winds were against us...When a moderate south wind began to blow, they thought they could achieve their purpose; so

⁸⁹ 'according to Dibelius (*Studies* 205f) Luke has not reported his own recollections of the voyage, but wanted as an historian to give a typical account of a sea voyage'. Ernst Haenchen, *The Acts of the Apostles: a commentary* [translated from the German by Bernard Noble and Gerald Shinn, under the supervision of Hugh Anderson, and with the translation revised and brought up to date by R. McL. Wilson] (Oxford, Blackwell, 1971), p.710.

they weighed anchor and began to sail past Crete, close to the shore. But soon a violent wind, called the northeaster, rushed down from Crete. Since the ship was caught and could not be turned with its head to the wind, we gave way to it and were driven...We were being pounded by the storm so violently that on the next day they began to throw the cargo overboard, and on the third day with their own hands they threw the ship's tackle overboard. When neither sun nor stars appeared for many days, and no small tempest raged, all hope of our being saved was at last abandoned.

Acts of the Apostles, chapter 27, verses 1-20⁹⁰

This powerful first-person account is very direct and conjures a picture of a situation that would be terrifyingly familiar to sailors anywhere. Paul is told by an angel that although the ship will be lost, none of the crew or passengers will drown. His calm encouragement of his fellow sailors is a demonstration of his faith, and when the ship is finally sunk, and all the crew manage to swim to a Maltese island, Malta becomes the first Roman territory to convert to Christianity. Maltese churches are famously still filled with votive paintings and sculptures celebrating accounts of divine intercessions for sailors. For the Venerable Bede, in his writings in the ninth century, 'the storm is also an ever-present dimension of life for Christians. While on the waters of this life, our boat is always in danger from temptation.'⁹¹

Votive ship offerings are not, however, exclusively Christian in origin, as they were also a feature of the pagan religions of Britain and Europe. Examples of pagan and pre-Christian votive offerings have been found in peat bogs around the British Isles, including boat-shaped offerings such as the small golden model of an eighteen-oared sea-going curragh from the first century found at Brough, Co. Derry, Ireland,⁹² and a golden boat from Caergwrle Castle in Wales. The Caergwrle bowl, found by workers in 1823, is a votive object dating to the Middle Bronze Age, and originally manufactured from shale, tin and gold. It is thought to represent a boat with its ap-

⁹⁰ *Holy Bible: New Revised Standard Version*, p.158-9.

⁹¹ St. Thomas Aquinas, *Catena Aurea, III, Part 1* (Albany: Preserving Christian Publications, Inc., 1995), p.173.

⁹² A. Farrell, S. Penny and E. Jope, "The Brough Boat: A Reassessment," *Irish Archaeological Research Forum*, 2, no. 2 (1975). <http://www.jstor.org/stable/20495224>

plied gold decoration signifying shields, oars and waves.⁹³ This indicates that the symbolism of boats, as tools for trade and for carrying life and wealth safely across water, has been significant since the earliest navigators in these islands.

There is an ancient understanding that, as the philosopher Hans Blumenberg writes, 'there is a frivolous, if not blasphemous, moment inherent in all seafaring', and that the push-and-pull of the imperatives to travel, to explore and trade, the notion of plus ultra - more beyond - of great riches to be found, peoples with whom to trade goods or nations to be conquered necessitates 'a transgression of natural boundaries that was likely to result in punishment.'⁹⁴ This punishment could be avoided with suitable measures taken to assuage the correct deity. Magic and the power of intercessory objects is clearly evident in the surviving material culture from the earliest British mariners of the Christian faith. The motif of the ship in early Christian imagery and symbolism, rituals and rites, is in part explained by the significance of ships and sailing to the spread of the word of God across the Mediterranean and further north. As Morgan states, 'Promises are solemnly made... Publicly displayed imagery makes vows more meaningful and the hope for deliverance more promising.'⁹⁵ The public display of the vow's fulfilment was a crucial element of the sacred contract. The original offering was an individual act for personal intercession, but its completion is made in a public space, and moreover in a sacred public space. As such, these little ships would also serve as a reminder to congregations of their dependence on the sea for their livelihoods, and by extension dependence on the shipmasters. In addition, the importance of the sea to communities across the early Christian world meant that the idea of the ship at sea, with its fate entirely dependent on the mercy of God, is an easily comprehensible metaphor for the lives of man, and is an image used time and again in the Bible; Noah surviving the flood, Jesus calming the sea of Galilee, and Psalm 107; for those who 'went down to the sea in ships, doing business on the mighty waters.'⁹⁶ The second introductory quote to this chapter, describing 'the world is a sea in which the

⁹³ "Re-conserving the Caergwrle bowl," Rhagor: Explore our Collections, National Museum Wales (Archaeology and Numismatics Department). Accessed 31/01/2017 <https://museum.wales/1479/>

⁹⁴ Blumenberg, *Shipwreck with Spectator*.

⁹⁵ Morgan, *The Sacred Gaze*, p.59.

⁹⁶ *Holy Bible: New Revised Standard Version*.

church, like a ship, is beaten by the waves but not submerged', illustrates an early use of the sea and the church as a ship metaphor by one of the early church founders, Hippolytus of Rome.

The ship as a symbolic representation of the fragility of life would be easily understood by a pre-literate society. Therefore, the sight of a ship, floating in the semi-darkness of the church, would be significant to the worshipper on several levels. Existing in what Davis describes as 'communities of response',⁹⁷ the congregations of the church over generations created their own stories and meanings for these models, as shall be discussed in the following chapters. It is therefore unsurprising that ship models became symbols for sailors, shipmasters, and shipowners, and crucially were used to represent the status of these maritime practitioners in the church and in civic society. The ship also became a symbol of salvation through baptism, with the church as a ship protected by God that will deliver the souls onboard to the safe haven of eternity. Cardinal Ottoboni, later to become Pope Hadrian V, who came to England in 1265 during the reign of King Henry III, expounded the same idea in the church constitutions he wrote in 1268 for the English Church: 'For those embarking upon this great sea full of shipwrecks which is the world, Baptism is reckoned to be the first plank capable of bringing us to the port of salvation.'⁹⁸

Nor were three-dimensional ship models the only form for votive ship offering. Medieval graffiti of ships of all types appears in English coastal medieval churches. Champion's research into the graffiti in churches around Norfolk, England, has revealed extensive use of scratched two-dimensional models of individual ships on columns surrounding church shrines, in particular shrines to St Nicholas.⁹⁹ An article in a 1922 edition of *The Mariner's Mirror* also identifies 'the unauthorised handiwork of former inhabitants' and 'defacements' at St Margaret's-at-Cliffe church in Kent, England, 'sufficiently numerous to show that the practice of scratching or engraving fig-

⁹⁷ R. H. Davis, *Lives of Indian Images* (Princeton, NJ; Chichester: Princeton University Press, 1997), p.8.

⁹⁸ R. Graham and Cardinal Ottoboni, "Letters of Cardinal Ottoboni," *English Historical Review*, 15, no. 57 (1900), <http://www.jstor.org/stable/548415>

⁹⁹ M. Champion, *Medieval Graffiti: the lost voices of England's churches* (London: Ebury Press, 2015).

ures of ships upon piers was at one time prevalent.'¹⁰⁰ Westerdahl has found the same incised carvings in Nordic churches and similarly describes them as 'poor man's votive ships.'¹⁰¹ In Ireland too, archaeologists have discovered in Irish monasteries, castle chapels and parish churches, rough but deliberate carvings of mostly cargo vessels; simple cogs and Viking-style double ended ships. Brady and Corlett found:

the scale and detail evident in the ships etched on the plaster at Court Abbey and Moyne Abbey suggest that these were not casual doodles or the products of idleness...Indeed, there is also the curious consistency of the ship itself as the most frequent motif found incised on the plaster work of late medieval ecclesiastical sites.¹⁰²

As Emden observes of the numerous and occasionally large ships carved on prominent pillars close to the font at St Margaret-at-Cliffe, the artists were not frightened of being chastised for their carvings, and from the accuracy of details on the ships they were drawn by people familiar with their subject matter;

although perhaps more often than not executed by the roughest of draughtsmen, with the point of a knife or a marling-spike, were executed, at any rate, by men or youngsters who were familiar with ships and who scribbled up ships because ships were uppermost in their minds.¹⁰³

Systematic academic research into Scottish medieval church graffiti has yet to be undertaken, and existing studies in other parts of the UK are piecemeal, but the published studies reveal that as with all sea-borne traditions, there are ships carved in locations between ports on trading routes. At Kilchattan Church, Isle of Luing, Argyll, there is graffiti possibly showing Viking ships or medieval galleys.¹⁰⁴ At Garvock Parish Church in Aberdeenshire a small graffito of a sailing boat (20cm by 15cm) has been incised on the south east corner of the church.¹⁰⁵ There are carvings of ships left by Vi-

¹⁰⁰ A. B. Emden, "Graffiti of Mediaeval Ships from the Church of St Margaret's-at-Cliffe, Kent," *Mariner's Mirror*, 8, no. 6 (1922), <https://doi.org/10.1080/00253359.1922.10655116>

¹⁰¹ C. Westerdahl, "Medieval Carved Ship Images Found in Nordic Churches: the poor man's votive ships?" *International Journal of Nautical Archaeology*, 42, no. 2 (2013).

¹⁰² K. & Corlett Brady, "Holy Ships: ships on plaster at medieval ecclesiastical sites in Ireland," *Archaeology Ireland*, 18 no. 2 (2004).

¹⁰³ Emden, "Graffiti of Mediaeval Ships."

¹⁰⁴ Canmore Archaeology Notes, National Record of the Historic Environment, Historic Environment Scotland, <https://canmore.org.uk/collection/1545723>

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*

king seafarers at settlements on the Orkney Islands, but it is not possible to prove a religious significance to these drawings as the Vikings were prolific graffiti carvers.¹⁰⁶

The significance not only of making a votive offering prior to travel and on successful completion of a journey, but also as part of the performance of pilgrimage to sacred sites such as Canterbury, northern Spain or all the way to Jerusalem, is reflected in much of the surviving material culture from the medieval period. For example, the church ship graffiti in St Mary's church, New Ross, is an indication of it being one of the most important ports used by Irish pilgrims in the medieval period.¹⁰⁷ The influence of the established pilgrimage routes to medieval trade, in transporting people around the world but also goods and ideas is illustrated by the proliferation of ship emblems on town seals and pilgrim badges from that period.¹⁰⁸ Pilgrim badges, small mass-produced souvenirs often made of moulded lead or pewter were sold as proof of pilgrimage at holy shrines across Europe. A ship is a commonly found motif on pilgrim badges, such as on a fourteenth-century badge found in Norfolk from a pilgrimage to Canterbury that represents the ship of St Thomas Becket, and a French badge found in London showing the Virgin Mary and child standing on the deck of a ship.¹⁰⁹ This is associated with a church, Our Lady of Boulogne, Boulogne-sur-Mer, which has a miraculous statue that legend tells of being brought to the church by a ship with no crew.¹¹⁰ The pilgrim would touch the badge to the relic or shrine and then, by some mystical process of contamination, the badges were believed to contain some of the healing powers of the saint or shrine visited, and thereby become contact or secondary relics in their own right. The badge would be worn as a protective charm by the pilgrim on the journey home, where it would then be nailed to the home church as proof of pilgrimage, or thrown into a river, whence many have been retrieved by archaeologists. This is an example of the common belief in the magical power of intercessory ob-

¹⁰⁶ Graham-Campbell, *Viking Art*; F. McCormick and O. Kastholm, "A Viking Ship Graffito from Kilclief, County Down, Ireland," *International Journal of Nautical Archaeology*, 46, no.1 (2017).

¹⁰⁷ Brady, "Holy Ships."

¹⁰⁸ I. Friel, *The Good Ship: ships, shipbuilding and technology in England, 1200-1520* (London: British Museum Press, 1995).

¹⁰⁹ "Collections Online," Museum of London, Object ID: 82:2/10, accessed 16/02/2017, <http://collections.museumoflondon.org.uk/online/object/29178.html> (Collections Online: Pilgrim Badges).

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*

jects in this period, and how 'the relationship between form, matter, and sensory perception, was frequently used within religious discourse to suggest the receptivity of a devout person in a sacred or divine encounter.'¹¹¹ Ships frequently appear as a motif on pilgrim badges not only as symbols of the life and legends associated with the saints and shrines, but also as a symbol of the pilgrim's own journey and the importance of the pilgrimage itself. Through pilgrim badges, town seals and votive offerings one can read the impact of sea travel, pilgrimage and trade routes on the cultural exchange of early Christian societies across Europe.

The two earliest surviving European church ship models both date from the end of the fourteenth century and the beginning of the fifteenth century. The best known, the Mataró model, is named after the small town in Spain, north of Barcelona, from where the model originated. The other model is unique in as much that it is still on display in the original church in the east German town of Ebersdorf, today part of Chemnitz, for which it was made. The Mataró model research has been made widely available on the Rotterdam Maritime Museum's website, where the model itself is now on display. The museum's research gives information on the origin of the model, although acknowledging that this is 'a mystery', and there is no surviving documentary evidence to provide details.¹¹² Although the evidence may be lacking, there is a strong tradition supporting the model's interpretation as a votive ship with links to the veneration of St Elmo, a favourite saint of local fishermen in Mataró. The Rotterdam Maritime Museum's research details the model's age, its construction and the methods of scientific research used, such as radio carbon dating conducted to establish the model's age of 1419 plus or minus 30 years (1389-1449).¹¹³ Moreover, this is one of the few publications to reach conclusions about the vessel's real sailing capabilities based upon accurate calculations and using modern shipbuilding principles;

In 2003 Professor J. Gerritsma, ir. H. Wimmers and John Jansen Design approached the model from a shipbuilding perspective and tried to an-

¹¹¹ M. Holmes, "Ex-votos: Materiality, Memory, and Cult," in Cole and Zorach, *The Idol in the Age of Art*, p.170.

¹¹² "Mataro Model Online," Rotterdam Maritime Museum, (Exhibition and Research Publications), p.3. Accessed 7/08/2014, http://www.maritiemmuseum.nl/digitent/mataro/online/eng_mataronline.pdf

¹¹³ *Ibid.*, p.9.

swer a number of questions about the ship's stability, manoeuvrability, speed and sail properties using modern drawing and computing techniques. Their study found that the shape of the hull of the Mataró model is not realistic in shipbuilding terms.¹¹⁴

The circumstances of the model's use in the church is not clear, however, as there are several factors that make the Mataró model different from most other church and votive models; the plank-on-frame construction rather than the more common block-built, and the assumed method of display. The majority of ship models in churches are, on close inspection, quite crudely constructed. Intended to be seen at a distance and from below most church ship models are carved from a solid block of wood with details of transoms, gunwales, rigging and other structural features added for effect. The Mataró model, however, is constructed in the same way that an actual full-sized ship would have been built: a keel laid, frames attached and planks assembled carvel method with the forecastle and sterncastle built up; 'finally the hull is caulked and an extra protective layer of tallow applied,'¹¹⁵ as though the model was intended to be floated on water. This method of construction makes the model unsuitable to be displayed by hanging as there is no structural integrity in the hull and no suspension points are visible on the remaining hull or superstructure. This means that the model must have been displayed lying flat on an altar, shrine or in a recess.

There is some precedent for this method of display. The size and similar construction for the only other extant wooden European church ship model from this period, the Ebersdorf model, is also massive and unlikely to have been displayed by hanging.¹¹⁶ The majority of small wax and bronze ex-votos, common in Catholic churches, most of which are made to represent body parts, are also displayed flat on top of shrines or attached to walls, but the vast majority of later ship models in churches are solid, block models with an integral hook and rod hanging system somewhere near the main mast. The carefully detailed construction method of the Mataró and Ebersdorf models, and their scale, has more in common with late eighteenth-century Admiralty prototype models, known as Navy Board models, which were built to demonstrate the

¹¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p.11.

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p.7.

¹¹⁶ Christensen and Steusloff, *Das Ebersdorfer Schiffsmodell von 1400*. Actual measurements given as: extreme length 1150mm, beam excluding rubbing laths 515mm, stem height 445mm.

method of construction for the new navy, where the hull is left incomplete to allow examination of the internal spaces. The main difference is that the Mataró and Ebersdorf model hulls are complete. For some maritime historians, the maker, donor and associated cultural meaning of ship models is neither important nor conjectured upon. The importance of the model resides in what it can tell the maritime historian about ship construction in the early modern period and is not considered as an object in a wider cultural or art historical context. For an insight into this, we need to rely on examples from fine art such as Carpaccio's 'The Apparition of the Ten Thousand Martyrs' (c.1515),¹¹⁷ which shows ship models arrayed inside a church as the martyrs process in, as well as the ongoing traditions of votive offerings in some Catholic churches.¹¹⁸ Although the importance of the Mataró model has been recognised since at least the 1930s, the Ebersdorf model is a relative newcomer to the body of literature on church ship models, its true significance only being recognised in the late 1970s. Wolfgang Steusloff describes how his research for his book about church ship models in Mecklenburg-Vorpommern led him into correspondence with the chairman of the Parish Council at Ebersdorf, not far from the city of Chemnitz and a long way from the Baltic coast. Having examined the model at the Institute for Monument Conservation in Dresden in 1979, Steusloff was able to confirm it as 'a ship model dating from the Late Middle Ages, modelled after a Northern seagoing vessel of the time.'¹¹⁹ Eight years later, in November 1987, Steusloff examined the model again, this time with the Norwegian maritime archaeologist Arne Emil Christensen. Their 2012 book is the culmination of many years of research and scientific examinations, similar in nature to those undertaken by the Rotterdam Maritime Museum, using radio carbon dating to determine a date of approximately 1400.¹²⁰ This makes it the oldest plank on frame model in Europe. The model is over one metre in length, half a metre breadth, and nearly as tall at the stem.¹²¹ It has no rigging or superstructures remaining and, unlike the Mataró

¹¹⁷ Vittore Carpaccio circa 1460-1526. The Apparition of the Crucified of Mount Ararat in the Church of Sant'Antonio di Castello 1512-1513. Oil on Canvas, Gallerie dell'Accademia, Venice.

¹¹⁸ Nance, *Sailing-ship Models*, p.14.

¹¹⁹ Christensen and Steusloff, *Das Ebersdorfer Schiffsmodell von 1400*, p.29.

¹²⁰ *Ibid.*, p.47.

¹²¹ *Ibid.*, p.48. Actual measurements given as: extreme length 1150mm, beam excluding rubbing laths 515mm, stem height 445mm.

model, is a clinker-built vessel, 'no doubt built by a person with a detailed knowledge of shipbuilding.'¹²² The village of Ebersdorf was on a pilgrimage route, and the church was built in 1400 with money donations due to Ebersdorf being a pilgrimage site in its own right.¹²³ The location, although landlocked, is on the trade routes between the Hanse cities on the Baltic coast and the cities on route to Prague. There is a legend associated with the Ebersdorf 'Little Gold Ship', which is recounted in full by Christensen and Steusloff. The first published mention is traced to 1815 in an account by August Schumann, which refers to 'a small hanging ship, probably in commemoration of a chivalrous procession to the holy sepulchre.'¹²⁴ The longer, more romantic version of the tale is attributed to Widar Ziehnert, published in 1838 in *Sachsens Volkssagen* (Saxonian Folklore). It is a long ballad about a nobleman called Wolf von Lichtenwald (the House of Lichtenwalde were responsible for the maintenance of the Ebersdorf Colligate Church, where the model was displayed) returning from the Holy Land where he had been sent to fight nobly in battle in order to win the hand of his fair Kunigunde. On a ship sailing from Joppa to Venice they were caught in a storm and Wolf pledged:

A little ship, filled full of gold, I pledge to dedicate to thee at home, and
if I knew what was precious to thee, it should be thine own. Now grant
me, thou sublime one, my only fortune, and lead me back to my be-
trothed!

Finally, at the end of the poem the priest blesses the marriage and the model saying,

"Not all the gold, but your devout Christian disposition makes the
Blessed Virgin gracious to you! The little ship, may it henceforth show
the pilgrims the powerful help of the Holy Virgin!"¹²⁵

There is no evidence that this story is true. However, the fact that the legend exists and has inspired romantic poetry is significant, and illustrative of the way in which these models invite re-interpretation and folklore for successive generations.

Although there is no equivalent poem written about a ship model as there is for the Ebersdorf 'Little Gold Ship', tales of deliverance from storm are evident across the Scottish models, often without any evidence of truth, and enforce the oft-repeated

¹²² *Ibid.*, p.48.

¹²³ *Ibid.*

¹²⁴ *Ibid.*, p.14.

¹²⁵ *Ibid.*, pp.17-19.

understanding that sailors would commission models for churches in fulfilment of a vow to God for escape from peril on the sea; hence their designation as 'votive' offerings. For the most part, however, Christensen and Steusloff, in their considerations, are concerned with the physical construction of the Ebersdorf model and what it tells maritime historians about shipbuilding in the fifteenth century, and not with any cultural practices or the possible influences it may have had on later art and literature.

The earliest recorded ship models in British churches date from at least the fifteenth century, including those recorded by William Wyrcestre at St Anne's shrine near Bristol.¹²⁶ We can be reasonably sure, however, that the practice probably predates that by some centuries if the twelfth-century German examples in Heidesheim Cathedral are any guide.¹²⁷ It is possible that similar models were to be found in medieval Scottish churches; in the records of St Nicholas Kirk, Aberdeen, in which later were hung two ship models of very different periods and associations, a detailed account of the church states that 'About thirty years ago John Lawrence (note reads: Brazier, Guestrow, an intelligent antiquary) and another person made a search in Mary Magdalene's chapel, *hodie* the Broth Kitchen, when there were found several small wax images, and one of brass.'¹²⁸ Votive offerings should be considered in the cultural context of religious art at that time. As Frangenberg and Williams write,

we now recognize that meaning is produced by an interaction between the work, its environment, and the viewer, and that the art of the early modern period is especially attentive to the complexity of this dynamic... beyond being explicable in terms of 'aesthetic' experience, the act of viewing is now understood to play a deep and complex cultural role, a fundamental role in the formation of both individual and collective identity.¹²⁹

This seems particularly relevant when considering art intended for a very public and sacred space, such as displaying a sculpture in a prominent place within the church in

¹²⁶ "Antiquities of Bristow in the Middle Centuries; including the topography by William Wyrcestre, and the life of William Canynge [electronic resource]."

¹²⁷ W. Steusloff, *Votivschiffe Schiffsmodele in Kirchen zwischen Wismarbucht und Oderhaff*, 2. Aufl. ed. (Rostock: Hinstorff, 1990), p.8.

¹²⁸ Church St. Nicholas' Cathedral and Jacobus Cooper, *Cartularium Ecclesiae Sancti Nicholai Aberdonensis* (Aberdoniae: Soc. Nov. Spald. Impensis, 1888), pp.459-60.

¹²⁹ T. Frangenberg and R. Williams, *The Beholder: the experience of art in early modern Europe* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2006), p.1.

close proximity to the donor. In 'Ex-votos: Materiality, Memory, and Cult', Megan Holmes, writing about late fourteenth-century votive practices, states that 'Christian sanctuary culture in general was sensitive to accusations of idol worship, on account of the evident similarities between cultic devotion to the relics of saints and to sacred figurations and the adoration of images in pre- and non-Christian societies. In both theological and satirical writing, ex-votos were indicators of idol worship.'¹³⁰ It is also interesting to note that Holmes identifies cultural differences in the forms of votive offerings made. Predominantly shaped like body parts, medieval votive offerings were made to resemble the affliction for which prayers were offered; however,

during the fifteenth century, there was an increasing tendency by votaries from the middle and upper social ranks to encode markers of social identity and the particular votive experience in the material form of the ex-voto and to take a greater interest in the display of the ex-voto once it entered the sanctuary environment. The more traditional means of positing the identity of the supplicant in an ex-voto was through a coat of arms.¹³¹

However, literature on icons, relics and devotional images predominately focuses on the human form, either saints or body parts etc., rather than manmade objects such as ships. Shearman describes Renaissance art as operating in a 'transitive' manner, directly implicating the viewer and depending upon his or her active participation to complete the meaning-making process, a participation that might involve both the sense of immediate physical relation to what is represented and the kinds of conceptual input demanded by the most sophisticated pictures...to address the question of meaning in terms of function.'¹³² As shall be described in the following chapters, this meaning-making through both what is represented, and the status of the object, in particular its proximity to the meaning-makers in the church, specifically the seating areas designated for the mariners and other maritime benevolent societies in the church space, allowed for the models to remain after the Reformation. Without the structure of Saints Days and designated saint's shrines and altars in churches after the Reformation, the symbolism of the ship model became an important signifier for the maritime trades in

¹³⁰ Holmes, "Ex-votos," p.159.

¹³¹ *Ibid.*

¹³² Frangenberg and Williams, *The Beholder*, p.1; J. K. G. Shearman, *Only Connect: art and the spectator in the Italian Renaissance* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1992).

the church. As shall be seen in the next chapter, the ship, unencumbered by links to the idolatrous iconography of saints, and yet with a history of strong Christian metaphor, was a useful and permissible carrier of meaning and therefore the tradition continued long after the saints and shrines had disappeared from Scottish churches.

This chapter has established that there was a strong tradition of hanging and displaying ship models in churches across northern Europe. The examples provided show how these models performed as intercessory objects on behalf of their donors, and makers. The ship as a symbol for the fragility of human life pre-dates Christianity in Britain, as evidenced by boat burials and Viking graffiti; however, this chapter has described the ways in which ships were used as a Christian metaphor from the earliest teachings of the church founders. Two- and three-dimensional ship offerings, such as graffiti, wax models and pilgrim badges depicting ships, were personal pleas for protection made in the sacred, and therefore the most powerful, place, the church. The large ship models displayed in churches, such as those at Mataró and Ebersdorf, were impressive statements not only of personal votive behaviour, but their size, and associated stories and poems indicate they were made by persons of wealth and status in their churches. These pre-Reformation models were therefore not only personal but also very public in nature. The following chapter examines the earliest of the Scottish church ship models and explores what can be gained from an examination of their cultural contexts.

Chapter 3: Post-Reformation Scottish Church Ship Models

And there arose a great storme of wind, and the waves beat into the ship, so that it was now full. And he was in the hinder part of the ship asleepe on a pillow: and they awake him, and say unto him, Master, carest thou not, that we perish? And hee arose, and rebuked the winde, and said unto the sea, Peace, be still: and the winde ceased, and there was a great calme.

Mark 4:37-39 1611 KJV¹³³

The three oldest Scottish church ship models - the South Leith Parish Church model (see Case Study 20), the *Unicorn* at Kinghorn (see Case Study 14) and the *Schip* at Aberdeen (see Case Study 1), all of which appeared within a little over a century after the Reformation in Scotland – are examined in this chapter. These models are considered in the context of Scottish church and maritime communities, with attention afforded to what the models can tell us about their connections to royalty, superstition, overseas trade and their home ports. In order to fully locate these ship models in their true context we must understand their significance for the church communities in which they are displayed. The previous chapter explored the surviving pre-Reformation ships models in Mataró and Ebersdorf, and their meaning for the audiences who first encountered them. This chapter demonstrates that the ship model, as a sculptural art work in the context of post-Reformation churches, must have been immediately recognisable by the viewer, individually and collectively as members of the church, and particularly as members of seafaring societies. This chapter is the first time that research from the Kirk Session minute books, studies of post-Reformation church practices and the records of Sailor's Societies have been brought together to form an insight into the role these models played in the communities which installed them.

The precedence for artistic expression in churches in the period after the iconoclasm of the Reformation is complex. Kirk contends that:

a deliberate policy of iconoclasm - smashing and obliterating religious images - proved a crucial ingredient in organising revolutionary change.

¹³³ *The Holy Bible: New King James version*, NKJV wide margin reference ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008).

This Protestant reaction to forms of late medieval piety and devotion, which had focused on the cult of Mary and the saints, was one feature of what they identified as 'idolatry' ...in favour of purifying worship by purging it of all accretions considered to be false or detracting from the honour which God alone deserved.¹³⁴

This was similar to the situation in the Netherlands, which had close contemporary associations with Scotland through trade and common religious feeling, as shall be demonstrated later in this chapter. Seventeenth-century Dutch art is described in the following terms by Freedberg and de Vries:

Calvinist culture teaches one to reject graven images...The primacy of the word in Reformed thought derives not simply from the existence of sacred texts - as the iconoclasm so vividly demonstrated, there are no sacred images - but also from the belief in the intellectual superiority of the words as a means of communication.¹³⁵

This meant that Protestant churches across Northern Europe, and their affiliated guilds and organisations, such as the burgeoning maritime benevolent societies exemplified by Trinity House in Leith, tended towards painted tablets of Biblical verses to decorate their walls after the Reformation, rather than any potentially idolatrous imagery. Many churches and guilds started their own schools so as to teach reading and thereby make the word more widely accessible. Baxandall suggests, however, that many churches in countries that adopted the teachings of Calvin and Martin Luther, and had renounced 'idolatry,' nevertheless continued to decorate their church spaces with art. He links this seeming dichotomy to Luther's own divided feelings on the subject, notably in *Wider die hymelischen Propheten* (1524), and that:

by the later 1520s Durer's view of the image seems not untypical of government opinion in Nuremberg: the image is neutral, no more responsible for superstitious abuse than a weapon is responsible for murder...if properly used, images are a permissible pastoral device. Apart from anything else there is the fact, which Luther recognised in his own devotions that human beings insist on visualising and forming images in

¹³⁴ Kirk, "Iconoclasm and Reform," p.366.

¹³⁵ J. De Vries and David Freedberg, *Art in History, History in Art: studies in seventeenth-century Dutch culture* (Santa Monica, CA: Getty Center for the History of Art and the Humanities, 1991), p.2.

their mind. The answer to the problem is not iconoclasm but to purge the images of their abuses.¹³⁶

Whilst Baxandall sees the resolution of this problem as leading artists to 'replace devotional figures by narrative representations of the holy stories, and to relocate the images from within to outside the church, and not least into the home' we can see that the use of secular depictions was also deemed acceptable.¹³⁷ Brusati describes the 're-configuration of sacred and public space...The control of these highly charged spaces was a matter of considerable political interest and tension in the early years.'¹³⁸ This can be seen in other forms of sculptural art in churches. Gardner's work on fifteenth- and sixteenth-century English church pew end carvings, states that 'the Reformation does not seem to have put an end to it, though church building was not encouraged, and only secular subjects could be used.'¹³⁹ Frequently, of course, secular subjects meant images of ships, as they neatly combine the twin symbolism of the religious meaning and the socio-economic meaning, as discussed in Chapter 2. As Freedberg and de Vries state:

in the late Middle Ages the symbolic value of an object in a work of art was still most important...there was much more meaning to a ship than ropes, sails and planks. It could bear a number of meanings. To carry symbolic meaning the object had to be recognisable, to look real even if not exactly correct...a reasonable facsimile.¹⁴⁰

It is in this period that the three oldest surviving Scottish, indeed the oldest British, church ship models were made; the Danish model made for King James VI from the Trinity Church in Leith, the Scottish flagship *Unicorn* at Kinghorn, and the Dutch *Schip* from St Nicholas Kirk in Aberdeen.

In addition to the removal of idols from churches, the Reformation also deprived local guilds of their traditional opportunities to demonstrate their status in their

¹³⁶ M. Baxandall, *The Limewood Sculptors of Renaissance Germany* (New Haven; London: Yale University Press, 1980), p.72.

¹³⁷ *Ibid.*, p.72.

¹³⁸ C. Brusati, "Reforming Idols and Viewing History in Pieter Saenredam's Perspectives," in Cole and Zorach, *The Idol in the Age of Art*, , p.32.

¹³⁹ A. Gardner, *Minor English Wood Sculpture, 1400-1550. An essay on carved figures and animals on bench-ends in English parish churches [with plates]* (London: Alec Tiranti, 1958), p.11.

¹⁴⁰ De Vries and Freedberg, *Art in History, History in Art*, p.75.

communities through their annual saint's day parades. Todd describes the significance of Holy Days and processions as an expression of local power in the Protestant churches in early modern Scotland states:

the long-standing association of crafts guilds with their patron saints, in Scotland as elsewhere, made their post-Reformation lot particularly difficult and helps to explain why they appear so often before the sessions of Aberdeen and other towns for 'superstitious' celebrations of saints' and other holy days. For their members to cease observance of their own saint's day entailed loss of public identity... and undermined its corporate status in the town.¹⁴¹

There was some compensation for this loss in that the church authorities provided each guild with its own seating area, and so the shipmasters of many coastal towns and cities were granted their own loft within the church. This was the case at South Leith Parish Church, Kinghorn Parish Church and St Nicholas Kirk, Aberdeen, in front of which all three groups of mariners hung a symbol of their trade: a ship model. The mariners of these towns were allowed to process into the kirk as a group and sit together in their 'own clearly labelled gallery before the captive audience of their perforce Sabbatarian neighbours, [they] declared both their corporate identity and their piety as clearly as ever they had in earlier processions or festival pageantry.'¹⁴² An examination of any Scottish Kirk Session Minute Book from the period after the Reformation up until the mid-nineteenth century shows that seating in the church became a constant topic for argument and negotiation, and comes second only to ante-nuptial fornication for the amount of time and pages spent in deliberations by the Kirk Sessions. Church members (whether wealthy families, guilds or shipmasters societies) presented themselves and indicated their social standing visibly in the fabric of the church through the use of objects and decoration that could convey both their piety and their status. This could mean armorial badges on pew ends, or in the case of the seafaring associations, a ship model. Spicer, too, describes the Scottish church as a 'reformed Temple',¹⁴³ adding that:

¹⁴¹ Todd, *Culture of Protestantism*, p.187.

¹⁴² *Ibid.*, p.325.

¹⁴³ A. Spicer, *Calvinist Churches in Early Modern Europe* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2007), p.232.

the decoration, appearance and structure of these temples reflected the status of the Reformed community; displays of civic imagery and personal heraldry linked the buildings with the political elites. Such iconography and architectural display were not incongruous to those who were assured in their faith, and who like James VI could tell the difference between idolatry and decoration.¹⁴⁴

King James VI, who commissioned the first authorised English translation of the Bible while visiting Burntisland Parish Church in Fife, was the recipient of the oldest Scottish church ship model. This model of a Danish warship was made in around 1590 to celebrate his safe crossing with his new bride Anne of Denmark, and came to hang in the South Leith Parish Church at Leith, which was the church of the minister who married them.

The Reformation in Scotland was not one single event, but a gradual and hard-won transition from parish to parish. There was no single idea of what was, and was not, permissible in the new church, but rather a continual challenge and reinterpretation that varied across the country. The first Gaelic Book of Common Order printed in post-Reformation Scotland was a translation of an order of service, printed in Edinburgh by Robert Lekprevik, dated 24 April 1567. It was translated from the Latin and English into Gaelic by 'Mr John Carswell minister of the church of God in the bounds of Argyle whose other name is Bishop of the Isles.'¹⁴⁵ In this prayer book, the Bishop records one form of service for the blessing of a ship when going to sea, which contains a call and response prayer of intercession led by a minister with the ship's crew. This is in spite of the fact that call and response elements of prayers had been widely done away with, and were discouraged by the father of the Scottish Reformed church, John Knox.¹⁴⁶

The sailor's call and response is recorded as follows:

¹⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, p.232.

¹⁴⁵ McMillan, "Worship of the Scottish Reformed Church, 1550-1638," p.93.

¹⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, pp.94-5.

Let one of the crew say thus:
 The Steersman "Bless our ship'."
 The rest respond "May God the Father bless her."
 The Steersman "Bless our ship."
 Response "May Jesus Christ bless her."
 The Steersman "Bless our ship."
 Response "May the Holy Spirit bless her."
 The Steersman "What do ye fear and seeing that God the Father is with you?"
 Response "We fear nothing."
 The Steersman "What do ye fear and seeing that God the Son is with you?"
 Response "We fear nothing."
 The Steersman "What do you fear and seeing that God the Holy Ghost is with you?"
 Response "We fear nothing."¹⁴⁷

At a time when the keeping of festival saints' days, pilgrimages and even singing of carols and the celebration of Christmas were all banned, it is significant that sailors were still permitted prayers and special services that came very close to a format of intercessions outlawed in the new church. This exceptionalism underlines the importance of seafarers to the prosperity of the community, and an acknowledgement of the perilous conditions in which they worked. This may also explain the permissibility of a votive ship model in a Scottish church three decades after the Reformation. The sacred and supernatural purposes of church ship models as votive objects of divine intercession, as seen with the pre-Reformation models, may be a legitimate explanation of the model presented to King James VI, probably from his brother-in-law King Christian IV of Denmark. It is a Danish galleon model, which belonged to Trinity House Leith and was displayed in their church at South Leith, but is now in the collections of the National Museum of Scotland. After previous misidentification as a French galleon of 1560, linked to Mary of Guise,¹⁴⁸ the model became associated with King James VI and his safe return to Scotland with his new wife, Anne of Denmark, due to the insignia of Anne's brother, Christian IV, carved on the transom. It is a small model, only 645mm in length, but is brightly coloured in red, gold, black and green, with the hull adorned by deeply carved dancing figures, men wearing hats playing musical instruments and

¹⁴⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁴⁸ Chatterton, *Sailing Models Ancient and Modern*, Figure 20; Mason, *History of Trinity House of Leith*, p.181.

mermaids carrying tridents. The King's return to Scotland with his betrothed was beset by storms and the royal party were forced to seek refuge in Norway, where the minister of South Leith, David Lindsay, married the royal couple. Lindsay also went on to perform the coronation of the Queen when they finally arrived at Holyrood Palace amidst great celebrations. The storm that had imperilled the royal party was attributed to a plot to kill the king by witchcraft, and 70 people from North Berwick, a coastal village not far from Edinburgh, were accused of taking part. The coven of witches claimed, under torture, that they had killed a cat and thrown it into the sea to summon the storms, and that the Devil had told them that 'the king is the greatest enemy he hath in the world.'¹⁴⁹ The following account was published in London, based on a copy printed in Scotland:

Declaring the damnable life of Doctor Fian a notable sorcerer, who was burned at Edinburgh in January last, 1591. Which doctor was register to the devill, that sundrie times preached at North Berwick kirk, to a number of notorious witches. With the true examinations of the said doctor and witches, as they uttered them in the presence of the Scottish king. Discovering how they pretended to bewitch and drown his Majesty in the sea coming from Denmark, with such other wonderful matters as the like hath not bin heard at any time.¹⁵⁰

James VI gained a reputation as a witch hunter following the North Berwick witch trials. He studied the subject, publishing his findings in a discourse, *Daemonologie*, in 1597, and introduced additional legislation to punish those found guilty of witchcraft. The belief in the physical manifestations of magic continued long after, and it was not until 1722 that the last person was burnt to death as a witch in Scotland. Shakespeare's play, 'The Tempest', was first performed in 1611 for James VI, the same year that the King James Bible was published.¹⁵¹ In the play, the ship and the sea are presented as a means of punishment, nature under the control of magic being used to put right an injustice. At the start of Act One, Scene One, as the ship carrying the King of Naples and his son is breaking up, the Boatswain cries to the crew;

¹⁴⁹ J. Carmichael, attributed, *Newes from Scotland Declaring the Damnable Life of Doctor Fian a notable socerer, who was burned at Edinburgh in January last* (London, England: University of Glasgow Special Collections, 1591), <http://eleanor.lib.gla.ac.uk/record=b1757549>

¹⁵⁰ *Ibid.*

¹⁵¹ "The Tempest: Dates and Sources," Royal Shakespeare Company, 2019, <https://www.rsc.org.uk/the-tempest/about-the-play/dates-and-sources>

if you can command these elements to silence, and work the peace of the present, we will not hand a rope more; use your authority: if you cannot, give thanks you have lived so long, and make yourself ready in your cabin for the mischance of the hour, if it so hap.¹⁵²

The sea and the storm are understood to be supernatural spaces where survival is at the whim and mercy of God and magic. This is helpful to keep in mind when considering the context and interpretation of the ship models from this period. Superstitious beliefs, as seen in witchcraft or in the practices of the old religion, continued across Scotland long after the Reformation changed the form of Christian worship.¹⁵³ Even though the model of King James' ship dates from after the Reformation of the church there was still a clear belief—at the highest level of the establishment, as well as among the populace—in the supernatural, and the magical power of objects; accordingly, a magical context for the model can be reasonably considered. As Todd describes, 'in early modern Scotland was a realm of competing religious cultures, including not only the protestant/catholic rivals, but even more dangerous, the surviving pre-Christian culture of fairies, sorcery and charming.'¹⁵⁴



Figure 1: Stern of the South Leith Parish Church model, c.1590

¹⁵² W. Shakespeare, *The Tempest* (Shakespeare, William, 1564-1616. Works. 1984), ed. D Lindley (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002).

¹⁵³ McMillan, "Worship of the Scottish Reformed Church, 1550-1638", p.330.

¹⁵⁴ Todd, *Culture of Protestantism*, p.355.

It is not clear how the model came into the possession of Trinity House. The church at South Leith continued to be the place of worship for the King, and the minister David Lindsay, held an important role in the relationship between the King, Scotland and the Protestant faith. Lindsay had not only performed the marriage ceremony in Norway, but was also a leading Reformer and close friend of John Knox. He baptised James and Anne's son, Charles (later to be Charles I), and was one of the Commissioners for the Union of Scotland and England in 1603.¹⁵⁵ In 1614, the King bestowed a 'Golden Charter' on the Kirk Session of South Leith, which included the granting of additional lands. In recognition, the church built a special 'King's Loft' for him when he did finally return to Scotland in 1616. Trinity House was the major donor of funds in the construction of the church at South Leith, and as already one of the oldest and wealthiest organisations in Edinburgh's port town at that time, it set the precedent for maritime benevolent societies in Aberdeen, Burntisland, Bo'ness and Kinghorn. At the same time as South Leith was constructing lofts for the King to visit, at Kinghorn, a small village across the Firth of Forth from Edinburgh, in the Kingdom of Fife, the local mariners had formed themselves into 'the most important incorporation in the burgh,'¹⁵⁶ and in 1608 had persuaded the parish church 'to repair and tile the upper part of the South Aisle by building a loft.'¹⁵⁷ The South Aisle, being the nearest to the sea, and with seating designated specifically for the shipmasters and sailors, became known as the Sailor's Aisle. The Kirk Session Minutes of 24 May 1642 mentions the 'heightening of the 'Marrinry Loft' and 'a dozen bronzes'¹⁵⁸ (hanging lamps) to light the loft. The incorporation of Kinghorn's sailors met at the church during the week, and had their own entrance into the Sailor's Loft from the kirkyard so as to be able to leave to their ships when the tide dictated without disturbing the congregation.¹⁵⁹ When a new church was built on the site adjacent to the old church building in 1772, the Sailor's Aisle moved with it and the original date stone with 1609 can still be seen in the

¹⁵⁵ D. Robertson, *South Leith records compiled from the parish registers for the years 1588 to 1700; and from other original sources* (Edinburgh: A. Elliot, 1911).

¹⁵⁶ *A Short History of Kinghorn Parish Church of Scotland - The Auld Kirk by the Sea*, (Kinghorn, Fife: Kinghorn Parish Church, No date).

¹⁵⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁵⁸ Records of Kinghorn Kirk Session, 1581-1982, Records of Church of Scotland synods, presbyteries and kirk sessions, CH2/472, National Records of Scotland. CH2/472/2/112.

¹⁵⁹ A. Reid, *Kinghorn: A Notable Fifehire Town* (Kirkcaldy: L. Macbean, 1906), p.32.

exterior wall of the present Sailor's Aisle in the church. Above the Sailor's Aisle hangs a model of a 46-gun 'Scottish warship' called *Unicorn*. It is said to date from 1567, the year that the infant King James VI was crowned, and unicorns are associated with his reign, becoming part of the Scottish royal coat of arms, and then the British coat of arms with the Union of 1603. Unicorns are Scotland's national animal and appear in Scottish iconography from architecture to flags. There is no record of a Scottish flagship named *Unicorn* as part of James VI's navy; however, there was a previous Scottish-built ship of that name captured by the English in 1544 during the siege of Edinburgh. A close examination shows it is a block-built model, and the marks made by scraping the wood hollow can be seen beneath the built-up gunwales and rigging. The model itself, in particular its curved bow and broader beam, as well as the raised poop with quarter galleries and stern decoration, does not reflect the design of ships from the mid to late sixteenth century, as is claimed for its date of construction. The unicorn figurehead, carved as an upright figure raised above the rails at the bow is not consistent with the drawing of the *Unicorn* captured in 1544 as illustrated in the Anthony Roll, which shows a unicorn sitting on top of the flat beak.¹⁶⁰ The Kinghorn model is square-rigged rather than lateen rigged, although models are frequently re-rigged and this is not necessarily an indication of how it would have been rigged originally. The ship's overall shape, without the typical almost horizontal beak of the sixteenth century, has more in common with ships from the mid- to late-seventeenth century, and may be intended to represent another *Unicorn*, a 46-gun warship built by James VI's son, Charles I, in 1634.¹⁶¹ There was also a ship named *Unicorn* amongst the fleet set forth as part of the Darien scheme in 1698.¹⁶² It is also possible that the model does not represent any specific ship, but rather is an expression of Scottish pride and identity for the mariners of Kinghorn. It is still displayed in its original location, hanging above the Sailor's Aisle in the church, although protected by a Perspex box since the

¹⁶⁰ C. S. Knighton and D. M. Loades, *The Anthony Roll of Henry VIII's Navy: Pepys Library 2991 and British Library additional MS 22047 with related documents* (Aldershot: Ashgate for the Navy Records Society in association with the British Library and Magdalene College, Cambridge, 2000), p.70.

¹⁶¹ B. Lavery, *Ship of the Line: Volume 1, The Development of the Battlefleet 1650-1850* (London: Conway Maritime, 1983), p.158.

¹⁶² "The Key of the Universe: Scotland and Darien, 1695-1707," National Library of Scotland, 2011.

1950s.¹⁶³



Figure 2: *Unicorn at Kinghorn Parish Church displayed in a Perspex box*

In Aberdeen, a model of a Dutch 5th rate man of war was hung in front of the Shipmaster's Loft in St Nicholas' Kirk in 1689. St Nicholas' church is in the heart of Aberdeen's new town, just a few hundred metres up the hill from the city's harbour. The model was hung there by local shipmaster, Alexander Mackie. It illustrates how seventeenth-century shipmaster societies in Scotland traded in more than just wool, hides and salmon, and that they also engaged in cultural exchanges with their counterparts in continental Europe, particularly with the Staple ports of the Netherlands. The Shipmaster Society of Aberdeen, also known as the Seamen's Box, was a mutual benefit society, more insurance society than trade guild. The Society was founded in 1598, and granted a charter in 1600 by King James VI. The town of Aberdeen had provided a ship called 'the *Nicolas*' as part of the convoy that escorted King James VI to Denmark to collect his bride.¹⁶⁴ The same royal wedding party that gave rise to the South Leith church ship model in 1590 may also have been why consent was given to grant the Aberdeen shipmasters the royal charter on 19 February 1600, in favour of the Sea-

¹⁶³ The date for the Perspex case is approximate and comes from talking to one of the church elders who recalled it was installed after the model was included in a National Museums of Scotland exhibition, but there is no date for this.

¹⁶⁴ Clark, *A Short History of the Shipmaster Society*, p.3.

men's Box. This was seventeen years before the burgh of Aberdeen received its royal charter. Although other benevolent societies in Scotland and the Netherlands began appearing not long after, the Aberdeen Shipmaster Society is one of the first in Europe to be established after the Reformation.¹⁶⁵ Unlike the Fraternity of Shipmasters and Mariners of Leith, founded in 1380, later to become the Corporation of the Trinity House of Leith, the Aberdeen Shipmaster Society was not linked to a religious order in its founding. The influence of Trinity House Leith can be discerned, however, in the founding articles of the Aberdeen Shipmasters Society, signed in 1600 as a royal charter by James VI:

all schippis and crearis of onie uther toune within this Our realme, loss or laiddinis in the said port of Aberdene sall pay thair pryme-gilt to the said box, as the saidis maisteris and marineris of Aberdeine payis in the town of Leith.¹⁶⁶ This means that the Aberdeen shipmasters set their

fees by the charges they themselves paid when trading in Leith, their primary home commercial port. The Aberdeen Shipmasters Society was formed to provide welfare for elderly and infirm sailors and their families. All sailors, regardless of their rank, belonging to the port of Aberdeen were required to pay into what was known colloquially as 'the sailor's box.'¹⁶⁷ This sailor's 'prime gilt' payment was compulsory and in essence a form of welfare insurance.¹⁶⁸ The monies collected were kept in a specially made box with two locks, meaning that it could only be opened by two senior members of the society. The Aberdeen Shipmasters Society is described as:

a corporation fully representative of the seafaring interests of the burgh, embracing within its membership not only the shipmasters, but all the seamen, ship-carpenters and riggers, and its history during that period was practically synonymous with the history of the shipping trade of the port.¹⁶⁹

In addition to the subscriptions of ordinary sailors, vast sums of money were gifted by wealthy shipmasters and their 'relicts' (widows), as can be seen from one of the highly

¹⁶⁵ Karel Davids, "Seamen's Organizations and Social Protest in Europe, c. 1300–1825," *International Review of Social History*, 39 no. S2 (1994), p.152.

¹⁶⁶ Clark, *A Short History of the Shipmaster Society*, p.71.

¹⁶⁷ E. Patricia Dennison, David Ditchburn and Michael Lynch, *Aberdeen before 1800: a new history* (East Linton: Tuckwell, 2002), p.272.

¹⁶⁸ Clark, *A Short History of the Shipmaster Society*.

¹⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, p.3

decorated mortification boards, now in the collections of Aberdeen Art Gallery & Museums. Aberdeen's wealthy elite, in common with affluent merchant classes across Europe in the late sixteenth century, had experienced a shift in how they might demonstrate their wealth in the context of the church.¹⁷⁰ In this post-Reformation Scottish society, in which payments to the church or the purchase of indulgences were no longer a sure path to immortal redemption, there was now a new Protestant requirement to demonstrate one's worthiness through philanthropy and public acts of benevolence. This is certainly borne out by the contributions made to the Aberdeen Shipmasters Society. The earliest of three mortification boards painted for the Aberdeen Shipmasters Society is decorated with nautical symbols; an illustration of a ship underway at sea flying the flag of the Union as well as Saltires, an anchor, gilded sea-shells, and the city's crest (visible in the background of Figure 4.). On it is written, 'A Catalogue of Mortifyer's names, and their Destinations to the Poor of the Sea-men's Box of Aberdeen,' under which is listed the names, occupations and place of residence for each donor, plus the amount in £ s d, and the date. This board records the names of those who contributed money to the fund between 1703 and 1801. These gifts were extremely generous, given the equivalent buying power in today's money. For example, the £100 gifted in 1703 would be worth approximately £15,000 today, while the £6,000 gifted in 1801 would equate to over £400,000 in the early twenty-first century.¹⁷¹ These boards demonstrate that even two centuries after the Society was founded, it could still command large personal donations from its wealthy benefactors, sums worthy of richly decorative public display. The mortification boards also give an insight into the types of people donating to the Shipmasters Society. The first entry is from Robert Gordon, a factor (a Scots term for a manager or business agent) in Bourdeaux [sic]. Among the many shipmasters, merchants and widows, is William Stordy of Carlisle, who was the Comptroller for His Majesties Customs at the Port of Aberdeen. Clearly the great and good of Aberdeen wanted to contribute, and be seen to be contributing, even when they left to work abroad, or had moved to Aberdeen from else-

¹⁷⁰ Colleen McDannell, *Material Christianity: religion and popular culture in America* (Yale: Yale University Press, 1998), p.12.

¹⁷¹ Based on calculations from <https://www.measuringworth.com> - 1703 converted to retail price in 2017.

where. This was not an organisation that was purely of, and for, its own shipmasters and sailors, but had a role in demonstrating the status of its supporters. These same supporters, who before the Reformation may have commissioned works of art and sculpture for the church and would have seen those works destroyed in the iconoclasm of the Protestant churches, now looked to benevolent societies as an outlet for their attentions. This description of an outward-looking benevolent society supported by wealthy Aberdonians near and far is supported by the choice of a miniature Dutch naval vessel to hang in front of the Society's pews in the city's St Nicholas kirk. The model is now known as the *Schip*, in honour of its Dutch origins, but its original name, if it ever had one, is not recorded. The model is part of the permanent collections at Aberdeen Maritime Museum. It is over a metre high and nearly a metre and a half in length, fully rigged but without sails and no indication of crew or other figures on board. A rampant golden lion is carved at the figurehead and faces can be seen carved on to the ends of the catheads, while the transom is topped by three outsized lanterns. Gun ports are displayed open, with disproportionately large guns sticking out ready for action.



Figure 3: *Aberdeen Schip* after restoration (copyright Aberdeen Art Gallery & Museums Collections)

The whole ship was redecorated in bright red, white and gold paint following an enthusiastic restoration in 1982. Its Dutch antecedents were identified by a close examination at the time of its restoration in the 1980s, and were queried by the model maker tasked with undertaking the work. The restorer describes the figurehead as 'typical of the crowned lion type introduced by Charles II for all men of war, other than 1st rates,'¹⁷² However, the lion carving on the Aberdeen *Schip* very clearly has no crown, and is in fact far more typical of Dutch warships of that period, as shall be demonstrated. A study of the contemporary sketches of Dutch warships made by Willem van de Velde the Younger shows that a majority of Dutch naval vessels carried a rampant lion figurehead, its hind legs stretched behind and under it, front paws raised and mouth open, the lion being a symbol of the United Provinces, and none are shown with a crown.¹⁷³ Whereas British naval vessels of that period, as seen not only in the collection of van de Velde studies held at the National Maritime Museum, Greenwich, but also in their excellent collection of contemporary Navy Board models, clearly illustrate a variety of figurehead motifs, including more crowned than uncrowned lions.¹⁷⁴ On the top rail above the taffrail two exaggerated dolphins have twisted their tails around a shield that looks to bear the Arms of Amsterdam, three saltires stacked vertically on a black pale, albeit very heavily over painted and faint. This motif is very common on Dutch warships and East Indiamen. The lack of carved wreaths decorating the gunports is also a clear indication of a Dutch ship; British vessels typically surrounded

¹⁷² Condition Report from D. Smith, Marine Modelmaker, 5 July 1981. Reproduced with permission from Aberdeen Art Gallery & Museums

¹⁷³ Examples showing the crown-less rampant lion figurehead can be seen on models and sketches of the great Dutch warship *Hollandia*, 1665. See G. C. E. Crone, "The Model of the *Hollandia* of 1664-1683," *Mariner's Mirror*, 4, no.4 (1914), and numerous of van de Velde's sketches in the collections of the National Maritime Museum, Greenwich, London; for instance, *Gouden Leeuw*, 1666 (PAI7263); *Liefde*, 1664 (PAG6185); *Wulpenburg Amsterdam*, c. 1659 (PAG6180); and "Portrait of a Dutch two-decker," 1665 (PAG6195).

¹⁷⁴ A Navy Board model of a fourth-rate Royal Navy warship of 1660, and therefore contemporary with the van de Velde drawings, shows a crowned lion figurehead (National Maritime Museum, Greenwich, London, Caird Collection, SLR0366), as does the model of the third-rate 70-gun ship *Bedford*, 1698 (SLR0384) in the same collection. Van de Velde's drawings of British naval vessels illustrate a variety of figurehead motifs: *St Andrews*, c.1670, and *Triumph*, c.1675 (PAG6224 and PAG9361), both show variations on horses and seahorses. However, the Royal Navy warship *Mordaunt*, of 40-50 guns, 1681 (National Maritime Museum, Greenwich, London, Caird Collection, SLR0004) has a similar figurehead to the Dutch lions.

at least the top row of gunports with a decorative wreath or other carvings, whereas this is not seen on Dutch vessels of the same period.¹⁷⁵

Just as with the Danish model from South Leith, and the *Unicorn* at Kinghorn, the hull is of a solid construction, carved from a single block of wood with built-up top-sides. When viewed in its current situation in a museum display case, the guns appear cartoonishly large and the masts seem to have been stretched. The effect of these distortions when seen on the level and up close is marked, but would have been a deliberate calculation by the model maker. This model, and that at Kinghorn, was intended to be displayed suspended from a dark church ceiling by chains or on a rod, so that they would appear to float in space, sailing ethereally through the heavens. The oversized and out of scale features were created deliberately to make them more distinct when seen at a distance from below and in poor lighting. The extreme perspective of viewing the model from below would have had a foreshortening effect on the tall masts. This is in stark contrast with how the model is encountered in the museum today; in a brightly lit room displayed inside a glass case alongside church silverware, where the model can be viewed from every angle. The shipmasters who commissioned this model to hang in front of their loft in St Nicholas Kirk may well have had a closer view from their seats, but certainly none of the congregation below would have been able to make out much more detail than the overall impression of a fine fighting vessel appearing to sail through the church. What is recorded about the antecedents of this model comes from Clark's history, the Society's own minute books for this period having disappeared since the history was written. Clark attributes the donation of the model to a member of the Shipmaster Society named Alexander Mackie in 1689, and quotes a memorandum in the books that he 'had gifted ane ship to the Loft and did Hinge the same at his charge [sic].'¹⁷⁶ The east chapel of St Nicholas Kirk, the main church in Aberdeen's new town, had been completely remodelled in 1670.¹⁷⁷ The city had suffered severely during the dark times of the Wars of the Covenant, when Scot-

¹⁷⁵ See the van der Velde studies above, plus examples in Chatterton, *Sailing Models Ancient and Modern*, and Nance, *Sailing-ship Models*.

¹⁷⁶ Clark, *A Short History of the Shipmaster Society*, p.26.

¹⁷⁷ John Stuart, (ed.), *Extracts from the Council Register of the Burgh of Aberdeen, 1625-1642* (Edinburgh: Scottish Burgh Records Society, 1871, 1872), p.267.

tish congregations fought and died to hold true to the tenets of the Reformation during the period of civil war. Aberdeen had fared particularly badly during the wars, the Battle of Justice Mills in September 1644 marking a low point of slaughter and disarray in the city. The turmoil of civil unrest was compounded by the arrival of a devastating plague epidemic in 1647 that gripped the city for a year and took a serious toll on the city's population and its trade. In a sermon published in 1645 while plague ravaged the capital, Edinburgh Minister Rev. Archibald Skeldie, asserted that 'the wrath of God against Scotland is being manifested by the devouring sword that hath killed many of our brethren in the North, and by the plague of pestilence in the south.'¹⁷⁸ In this case, the 'devouring sword' was the Earl of Montrose, who brought an army representing the King to quash a rebellion in support of the Covenant. The plague of pestilence was soon to arrive, bringing the 'hand of God.'¹⁷⁹ Aberdeen had been visited by the bubonic plague many times before the final epidemic of 1647, but this year-long attack was the most devastating.¹⁸⁰ Approximately one person in five died of the disease, and society, just three years since Montrose had brought civil war to the city's streets, effectively collapsed:

There were no markets, no courts or church services. Camps for the sick and the dying were erected on the Links and at Woolmanhill. Anyone sent to these camps was being handed a death sentence. The council enacted strict laws to deal with the situation with mass graves opened on the Links where hundreds of people were buried.¹⁸¹

The shipping trade of Scotland was devastated during the seventeenth century and this had an impact on the Aberdeen Shipmasters Society's finances. In the Society's minutes for 1689 it was recorded that their pensioners had to be content with 3/4 parts of their allowances 'till it please God to bless us with peace and trade again.'¹⁸² It can be imagined therefore that displaying a model of the type of vessel seen in the

¹⁷⁸ J. Ritchie, "A Seventeenth-Century Sermon Anent the Pestilence," *Medical History*, 2 (1958), p.144. <https://search.proquest.com/docview/1301874168?accountid=11528>

¹⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, p.144.

¹⁸⁰ Dennison, Ditchburn and Lynch, *Aberdeen before 1800*, p.267.

¹⁸¹ "Reenactment reveals devastating impact of the plague on Aberdeen," *Aberdeen Council News*, 2012.

http://www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/CouncilNews/ci_cns/pr_plaguereenactment_040712.asp
Accessed: 11/03/2016.

¹⁸² Clark, *A Short History of the Shipmaster Society*, p.17.

trading countries of Europe, particularly the maritime powerhouse of the Netherlands, could be understood as a gift of thanks for having survived such difficult times, and to that extent regarded as a 'votive' offering. Certainly, there is evidence to suggest that in sacred vows, of the type made before the Reformation, the crucial element of a sacred contract made manifest in the church, were still held to have very real power in post-Reformation Protestant Scotland. Todd, in her exploration of *The Culture of Protestantism in Early Modern Scotland*, gives an example of the Elgin merchant William Guthrie, who gave the kirk six glass windows 'which he avowed to do in his danger in peril on the seas.'¹⁸³

By April 1670, the city of Aberdeen was on the up again, following the ravages of the civil war and plague, and a petition was made to the council by six Aberdeen skippers for the construction of a seaman's loft, an elevated seating area in St Nicholas' Kirk, the largest church of the new town. The sailors complained that such lofts were to be found in other Royal burghs;

but the seamen of this burgh were altogether destitute of such accommodation, seeing there was commodious places betwixt the pillars on the south side of the New Church where with their permission they should make up a loft in decent manner for the afore said effect, which should not in the least be any ways prejudicial to the lights of the kirk, but rather tend to the decorement thereof...which should encourage them to carry and behave themselves as became.¹⁸⁴

The coronation of the new King William and Queen Mary in April 1689 was celebrated in Aberdeen by a summoning of the town and magistrates to a sermon in St Nicholas Kirk, with the town's guns fired and bonfires lit.¹⁸⁵ The new king consolidated the Protestant hold on the English, Irish and Scottish thrones, ousted the Catholic James and boosted the Anglo-Dutch alliance against the French King Louis XIV. The shipmasters of Aberdeen, as a civic and charitable body representing links with the trading countries, understandably would be proudly boasting of their connections to the Netherlands. Certainly, the installation of a Dutch warship into the heart of these celebrations would be fitting, and it is likely to be more than a coincidence that the model

¹⁸³ Todd, *Culture of Protestantism*, p.353.

¹⁸⁴ Stuart, *Extracts from the Council Register*, p.267.

¹⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, p.311

arrived in Aberdeen and was installed in the church that same year. The evolution of the seating arrangements in St Nicholas Kirk was also a significant indicator of the ways in which civic status could be represented there. Englishman, Richard Franck, visiting Aberdeen in 1656, described a visit to St Nicholas Kirk before the sailor's loft was constructed. He writes of 'every merchant in his peculiar pew, where every society of mechanicks [sic] have their particular seat, distinguished by escutcheons, suitable to their profession.'¹⁸⁶ It is significant that the model given by shipmaster Alexander Mackie to hang in front of the sailor's loft was Dutch-made, and this tells us something about links between Aberdeen and the Netherlands over and above those of the new monarch. Aberdeen had long established trade routes with Europe and in particular with the Netherlands, which had formal connections going back at least as far as 1444.¹⁸⁷ Indeed, the archaeological collections at Aberdeen Art Gallery and Museums contain multiple examples of stoneware from northern Europe dating to the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries.¹⁸⁸ Given the importance of the church to the social fabric of life at that time, one can state that Aberdeen merchants, and shipmasters in particular, would have been very familiar with the church traditions of their trading partners in northern Europe. The choice of a Dutch man-of-war as emblem for the Shipmasters Society is interesting. The vessel, commissioned by and for shipmasters, is not necessarily intended to represent a particular named vessel, nor is the model built to any particular scale, but it would have had to have been accurate enough as a miniature representation of the ship to satisfy their professional expertise, and yet it is clearly not the type of vessel they themselves owned or that would have been seen in the harbour at Aberdeen. Rather, it is an example of the latest sailing technology, and a nod to Dutch naval superiority. It is certain that a Dutch warship would have been easily recognised, even by the layman, as a symbol of international power, wealth and

¹⁸⁶ R. Franck, *Northern Memoirs, calculated for the Meridian of Scotland; to which is added, the contemplative and practical angles*, New ed. (Edinburgh: A. Constable, 1821). Cited in P Brown, *Early Travellers in Scotland* (Edinburgh: D. Douglas, 1891), p.205.

¹⁸⁷ J. Yair, *An Account of the Scotch Trade in the Netherlands and of the Staple Port in Campvere* (London, 1776); V. E. Clark, *The Port of Aberdeen. A history of its trade and shipping from the 12th century [with plates]* (Aberdeen: D. Wyllie & Son, 1921), p.11.

¹⁸⁸ For example, Acc. No. ABDMS053607, Greyware Pitcher: 'jug was made in the Low Countries (Holland, Belgium and Luxembourg), in the late 14th century,' Aberdeen Art Gallery & Museums. <http://www.aagm.co.uk/thecollections/objects/object/Greyware-Pitcher?l>

dominance. Importantly, the model would have been a way for the shipmasters to dominate the otherwise austere space of the new church. This may also provide a clue as to why Master Mackie chose a ship model, rather than a stained-glass window, silverware, plaque or other acceptable device, for the promotion of the Society. A three-dimensional model of the world in miniature has the power to capture the attention and imagination of the viewer in a way that a two-dimensional illustration cannot. That these public statements were made within the sacred space of the church is also significant. Todd notes that guildsmen 'were intent on defining their corporate identities and privileged status in that context by using material objects that were religious in their association with hearing the word preached, but that also obviously contained layers of social meaning in their construction, design and placement.'¹⁸⁹ Indeed, in Aberdeen, 'by the 1650s, decorative art was used, not for the glory of God, but for the badges of rank which adorned the pews of the elite and reinforced social distinctions amongst them.'¹⁹⁰ This understanding is confirmed by Clark, who states that permitting the building of a new loft solely for the use of 'the various grades of mariners belonging to the Society'¹⁹¹ demonstrated that:

the Society of Shipmasters was regarded by the magistrates as a corporate body of importance in the municipal life of the burgh...The Seamen's loft was erected above the Grammar School loft at the west end of the church, and there was accommodation in it for the various grades of mariners belonging to the Society, the front seats being appropriated to the masters, the second seats to the mates and the back seats to the ordinary seamen. The front of the loft was hung with a green cloth, and on the death of a Shipmaster a black cloth was substituted...on the front of the loft there was also painted the picture of a ship.¹⁹²

In the seventeenth century, Aberdeen's primary trading links were with the Dutch province of Zeeland and the Staple port at Veere.¹⁹³ The Staple port system gave Scottish merchants the right to export their goods duty free into Zeeland. Initially the agreement was with the town of Bruges, signed in 1407, and then Middleburg, but

¹⁸⁹ Todd, *Culture of Protestantism*, p.325.

¹⁹⁰ Dennison, Ditchburn and Lynch, *Aberdeen before 1800*, p.300.

¹⁹¹ Clark, *A Short History of the Shipmaster Society*, p.26.

¹⁹² *Ibid.*, pp.26-27.

¹⁹³ Clark, *Port of Aberdeen*; J. Davidson and Sir A. Gray, *The Scottish Staple at Veere: a study in the economic history of Scotland* ([S.l.]: [s.n.], 1909).

when the French and Spanish influences became too much for the Scottish merchants they formed an agreement with Veere in 1541 where local people were in sympathy with the views of the Scottish trading community. Writing in 1776, Rev. James Yair, minister of the Scottish church in Veere, describes how Scottish merchants in 1541, following a period of unrest between the Netherlands and British ports about herring fishing, negotiated the Staple agreement.¹⁹⁴ The Staple agreement was not only a duty-free market for the Scottish merchants, but provided all manner of protections from arrest, and privileges of buying and selling, in exchange for their use of the port exclusively for unloading their goods to the wider continental market. In addition to the rights of trading and protection, the Scottish merchants were also provided with home comforts in the town. Yair quotes an extract from the articles of the 1541 Staple Contract:

We grant to the said nation, a house within our town of Campvere, the most commodious and convenient that can be found, for those of the said nation, without paying any hire, with freedom of excise upon wine, or beer, for those of the said nation; and likewise they shall not pay excise for victuals imported for their provision, entertainment and consumption [sic].¹⁹⁵

By 1668, 'a church, a churchyard, an inn, a recreation ground, and a prison were allotted to the Scottish community, the repair and upkeep of which were undertaken by the magistrates of Veere.'¹⁹⁶ The Scottish Staple ports of Veere and elsewhere were crucial to Scotland's economic survival in times of conflict with England, especially when other markets, such as France, were also inaccessible due to war. Veere was the last of the Staple ports to be established and one which flourished more or less until the French invasion of the Netherlands at the end of the seventeenth century. Even then the Scottish church at Veere continued, and in 1738, 'although the Staple organisation had almost ceased to exist,'¹⁹⁷ an Aberdonian magistrate recommended that it should be an Aberdonian candidate chosen to fill the vacancy in the Scots church at Campvere.¹⁹⁸ Clearly the trade with Flanders was crucial not only to the civic leaders in

¹⁹⁴ Yair, *An account of the Scotch trade in the Netherlands and of the Staple Port in Campvere*.

¹⁹⁵ Davidson and Gray, *Scottish Staple at Veere*, p.417.

¹⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, p.350.

¹⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, p.321.

¹⁹⁸ Clark, *The Port of Aberdeen*, p.69.

Veere, but also to the merchants in Aberdeen, who remained loyal to Veere long after other cities were selling their wares in the markets of Protestant Rotterdam and elsewhere. One correspondent writes, when the Scottish Staple was moved for a short period to Dordrecht in 1673, 'the people of this town [Veere] were doing all they could to get the Staple back, and in this they were loyally supported by their old allies the merchants of Aberdeen.'¹⁹⁹ Instances of cultural trading between the port cities are also frequently in evidence from the Burgh Records of Aberdeen; for example, in 1539, 'the Tolbooth clock had to be sent to Flanders to be repaired.'²⁰⁰ The Dutch inspiration for the Scottish models may come from those at the Great or St Bavo Church in Haarlem. There, three ship models were hung in the mid sixteenth century representing a daring naval escape by Haarlem ships in the thirteenth century. These ships represent an important moment in the city's history as well as a facet of Harlem character; ingenuity and determination in the face of danger.²⁰¹ Their position, hanging between pillars close to a shrine of St Olav in the central church of the city, with a famously austere white interior as shown in Pieter Saenredam's paintings of the early seventeenth century, emphasises their importance. That the models survived after the shrine was destroyed in the purge of the Cathedral's decorations in 1578, known as the Haarlem Noon, is significant. Iconoclasm focused on 'those objects that had too much power or presence, primarily sculptures and reliquaries, and figural images of God, Christ and the saints that were in easily accessible locations and appeared to be alive, misleading worshipers into idolatry.'²⁰² Church interiors in the Netherlands, as in Scotland, became contested spaces after the iconoclasm of the Reformation with power struggles over what was, and what was not, permissible:

The control of these highly charged spaces was a matter of considerable political interest and tension...artistic centres such as Haarlem and Utrecht where the pressure to cleanse churches of idols met with a strong countervailing interest in preserving the artistic and cultural remains...such competing exigencies assured that the removal of imag-

¹⁹⁹ M. P. Rooseboom, *The Scottish Staple in the Netherlands. An account of the trade relations between Scotland and the Low Countries from 1292 til 1676, with a calendar of illustrative documents* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1910), p.221.

²⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, p.54.

²⁰¹ M. M. Mochizuki, *The Netherlandish Image after Iconoclasm: material religion in the Dutch Golden Age, 1566-1672*, 1st ed. (England: Ashgate, 2008), p.205.

²⁰² *Ibid.*, p.113

es...remained a matter of ongoing negotiation well into the seventeenth century. As principal sites of these negotiations the public churches offered perhaps the most palpable material evidence of the local histories of the Reformation.²⁰³

The maritime trades benefited from allowances that were not available to other groups, as can be seen in the permission for the call and response prayers for the Gaelic speaking sailors of the north of Scotland, and the inclusion of maritime symbols in the otherwise newly blank church space. Once again, sailors and shipmasters demonstrated their unique position of importance through the physical representation of their trade in a dominant public space.



Figure 4: *The Schip and mortification boards in the offices of the Aberdeen Shipmasters Society (copyright Aberdeen Art Gallery & Museums Collections)*

The record of the long running links between Scotland, and Aberdeen in particular, and the Netherlands, is pertinent to a study of the Shipmasters Society in Aberdeen and how its members came to select a Dutch 5th rate vessel as the emblem to hang in front of their loft in the public space of the city's main church at that time. The Staple port trade agreement was by no means unique to Aberdeen, with similar ar-

²⁰³ Brusati, "Reforming Idols," p.32.

rangements established with other eastern Scottish ports, such as Culross and Leith.²⁰⁴ The early philanthropic endeavours of the Aberdeen Shipmaster Society was also replicated elsewhere in the trading ports of Scotland, and in many of these locations ship models now hang in churches.²⁰⁵ At Bo'ness Old Parish Church, which was also home to the Sea Box Society formed in 1634, an organisation similar to that of the Aberdeen Shipmasters Society, the seventeenth-century pulpit originates from the Netherlands. The Bo'ness ship model will be looked at in the next chapter.

The three oldest surviving ship models to have come from Scottish churches illustrate the interconnection between mariners to all levels of society in the sixteenth century; from the royal houses of northern Europe to the poorest seamen and his reliant dependant on the seamen's benevolent societies. These models represent the transition from the magical belief in the power of objects to fulfil sacred vows to the emblems of power and wealth in civic society. In 1769, less than a century after the shipmasters of Aberdeen installed their model, Thomas Pennant described visiting the church;

I observed a small ship hung up; a votive offering frequent enough in Popish church, but appeared very unexpectedly here. Some vindicate the practice, and say that the ship only denotes the right the mariners have to a sitting place beneath; but perhaps much may be said on both sides.²⁰⁶

For the Scottish post-Reformation era models there is certainly evidence, demonstrated by their positioning in front of the shipmaster's loft at the centre of the city's main church, that they should be regarded as 'symbols of maritime professional groups,'²⁰⁷ and therefore more a signifier of power and piety, status, cultural trade and commerce than a religious relic or supernatural talisman. However, an abiding belief in superstitions, including witchcraft, as seen with the model of King James VI's ship and the witch trials of North Berwick, suggests that the power of objects to influence the natural world and the seas in particular, was still very much a consideration.

²⁰⁴ Rooseboom, *Scottish Staple*.

²⁰⁵ Davids, "Seamen's Organizations and Social Protest in Europe," p.152.

²⁰⁶ T. Pennant, *A Tour in Scotland MDCCLXIX* (Perth, Scotland: Melven Press, 1979), p.122.

²⁰⁷ W. Steusloff, *Kirchen-Schiffsmodelle im Wandel*, (Bremerhaven: Deutschen Schiffahrtsmuseums, 2000).

The importance of sailors to the financial wellbeing of port towns and to wider international connections, combined with the inherent perils associated with their work, is underlined and acknowledged by the physical place sailors had in the churches and that sailors had their own forms of prayer. It is perhaps also because of the unique dangers involved in seafaring that the Shipmaster Societies began to appear at the end of the sixteenth century as a form of welfare benefit for sailors and their families. By the time of the Glorious Revolution at the end of the seventeenth century, when the Dutch frigate was hung up in front of the Aberdeen Shipmasters Society loft at St Nicholas Kirk, Scottish seafarers represented a real link to the dominant global power and the new British monarch. Scottish ports were looking to the Netherlands for their cultural and business trade, as well as how to represent themselves in the new style of church. By copying the Northern European practice of hanging ship models in their churches the seventeenth-century Scottish shipmasters were asserting their place in the ranks of the most important members of the church community, with a ship in place of a coat of arms, at the centre of civic and religious activity.

There is a curious lack of ship models in Scottish churches surviving from the eighteenth century. Only one is recorded from that period, a Royal Naval frigate made in 1739 for St Paul's Episcopalian Chapel in Aberdeen, a gift of the Aberdeen Shipmasters' Society.²⁰⁸ It was lost after the chapel closed with no record of the model's maker or its donor. The nineteenth century saw another period of turbulence in the Scottish church and a boom in both church and ship building across the nation. Little surprise then that there should also be a flurry of miniature ships to represent this burgeoning industry. The following chapter is concerned with the resurgence of ship models in Scottish churches in the nineteenth century, and considers the ghost fleet of model ships which disappeared in that century.

²⁰⁸ Clark, *A Short History of the Shipmaster Society*, p.65.

Chapter 4: Nineteenth-century Scottish Church Ship models

***Though raging seas and blust'ring winds
Have tossed me to and fro
Yet here I lye at anchor safe
At anchor safe below
Where I do lye at anchor safe
With many of our fleet
Yet once again I must set sail
Our Admiral Christ to meet***

Epitaph, Kinghorn Churchyard, Fife

The previous chapter looked in detail at the three oldest church ship models in Scotland and established their links to Scotland's international status and national identity. It considered how the models represented localised status within the church community for the shipmasters and mariners who installed them, and made bold statements about the shipping trade's links to royalty, prosperity, international trade and Scottish maritime strength. This chapter describes the eleven nineteenth-century church ship models, locates them geographically around the coast of Scotland, and places them in the historical context of their host churches. By examining events in Scotland during the nineteenth century, in particular within those church communities, this chapter draws some conclusions as to what their meaning or purpose was for the communities that installed and maintained them. It also notes the lack of surviving eighteenth-century models and proposes some suggestions as to why none made during that long period exist today. It will be shown that the three earliest nineteenth-century models are linked to sailors from the Napoleonic wars, but the majority of the models, from the mid-nineteenth century onwards, are linked to the building of new churches, expansions of churches and renovations. It will also be demonstrated that each model gives an insight into its respective church, the congregation's relationship with their minister, the composition of maritime groups and their place in the wider community. The changes occurring within Christian groups in Scotland, not least the Church of Scotland, at that time are considered and conclusions drawn as to what impact these may have had on coastal maritime communities. This chapter illustrates that it was important for seafarers, whether ship masters or ordinary sailors, to be symbolically

represented in their churches and therefore their wider communities, as illustrated by the wrangling over designated seating areas in church.

In order to locate this examination of church ship models it is helpful to have a brief overview of nineteenth-century Scotland and the religious landscape. Scotland had become part of the United Kingdom a century before and had prospered throughout the eighteenth century through trade with Europe.²⁰⁹ Even when the American War of Independence caused disruption for trades from the west of Scotland, the east coast ports such as Aberdeen thrived.²¹⁰ However, the eighteenth century ended with the Napoleonic wars which were to dominate maritime trades and the lives of sailors and shipmasters for the first two decades of the nineteenth century. The impact of this was felt in all ports and coastal communities, whether through impact on trade or the loss of sailors pressed into naval service to fight with Nelson at some of the most famous sea battles in British history.²¹¹ Nelson's victories were celebrated across the kingdom, and the final defeat of Napoleon at Waterloo was followed by calls for social change at home.²¹² Prosperity and regrowth characterised the two decades following the end of the war in Europe.²¹³ This was a time for repairing old churches, and as the coastal economies changed and the populations in some sea ports increased, new churches were also required. The Disruption of 1843 created the greatest schism in the churches of Scotland since the Reformation and more new churches proliferated in cities, towns and villages across the country.²¹⁴ This chapter finds that the remaining Establishment churches reasserted themselves as the primary churches in their parishes by reinforcing links with the traditional local trades, and the maritime industries in particular and that ship models were important symbols of this link.

Maritime industries changed as the century progressed, with fishing in particular transforming unrecognisably from small sailing vessels supplying local markets, to the large organised fleets of boats, latterly of steam trawlers, working up and down

²⁰⁹ T. M. Devine and J. R. Young, *Eighteenth Century Scotland: new perspectives* (East Linton: Tuckwell Press, 1999), p.3.

²¹⁰ MacLaren, "Religion and Social Class: The Disruption Years in Aberdeen," p.2.

²¹¹ Davids, "Seamen's Organizations and Social Protest in Europe."

²¹² Withrington, "The Idea of Religious Community at the Disruption," p.126.

²¹³ MacLaren, "Religion and Social Class," p.6.

²¹⁴ Withrington, "The Idea of Religious Community at the Disruption," p.126.

the east coast from Shetland to Norfolk, following the herring shoals and supplying the new markets created by the railway networks. Engineering and shipbuilding changed radically in this period, with the introduction of iron and then steel ships in the middle of the century, and this also had a huge impact on coastal populations, diversifying associated supply industries such as ropemaking and steel manufacturing and creating a draw for people to move off the land and into port cities.²¹⁵ These new centres of industry brought new populations and a multiplicity of beliefs and schemes for social improvements such as schools.²¹⁶ This corresponded with a resurgence of maritime mutual beneficial societies, as well as Seamen's Missions linked to initiatives such as the temperance movement.²¹⁷ Despite these enormous changes to the coastal communities of Scotland, this chapter will demonstrate that the local maritime populations maintained their links with previous generations by installing ship models in many of the new churches that were being built, and in the older churches being restored.

The research presented in this chapter builds on the work of the previous chapter; using Kirk Session minutes, inventories, Sailors' Societies records and the histories of individual towns and churches to construct a picture of these models and their significance to their church and maritime communities.

4.1 *The Napoleonic war models; Scotland's true votive ships.*

The first Scottish church ship models installed in the nineteenth century were all linked to the Napoleonic wars. Three models were installed in churches between 1802 and 1810, and all three are representations of Royal Naval vessels; the model of *Arethusa* at Ayr Auld Kirk (see Case Study 36); *Caledonia* initially installed at Ardrossan Parish church (see Case Study 35); and *Mars* at St Monans (see Case Study 11).

The oldest of these, the model of a 42-gun warship *Arethusa*, is one of the largest models to be found in a Scottish church at 2 metres in overall length. It is an impressive model hanging below a dark-wood barrel-vaulted ceiling and above the Sailor's Loft in the church, bows turned to the east. It needed to be a large and striking model because the church itself is large and impressive with multiple military stand-

²¹⁵ MacLaren, "Religion and Social Class," p.6.

²¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p.30

²¹⁷ Davids, "Seamen's Organizations and Social Protest in Europe."

ards displayed at high and low level around the walls in the wide cruciform space. On three sides, the dark wood pews surround the projecting and dominant central pulpit with its jutting sounding board. The ship model is not visible at all in many published photographs of the church due to the overhanging galleries that obscure it from view for much of the lower church seating. Its white painted hull, however, does stand out well against the dark ceiling, rendering it very visible for the people sitting in the central axis of the church, and for those seated in the opposite lofts; the merchants and the other trade guilds. The church was the childhood place of worship for the best loved Scottish poet, Robert Burns, and has a long and distinguished history dating back to Cromwell's invasion of the town in 1652.²¹⁸ The church was completed in 1654 and there is reference to a previous model dating from 1662, for which the seamen received a rebuke in 1682 for installing without permission.²¹⁹ This older model has two creation stories given for its origin; that it was a gift from French sailors who had been shipwrecked in the bay and sent the model as thanks for the assistance they received from the locals;²²⁰ and that it was installed by the local sailors themselves until such time as it became 'frayed and decayed' and had to be replaced.²²¹ It is not known which vessel the model was intended to represent; one of the few references to it inferred that it was a French barque; however, the barque was not a rig known in 1662 and the French sailor story is unverifiable.²²² In any event, the model was lost by the time the present model was installed in 1802.²²³ The church was heavily renovated in 1836, at which time the church was altered from a T-shape into the current cruciform layout, and two additional lofts were added allowing for the merchants, sailors and trades to have their own designated seating loft facing each other.²²⁴

²¹⁸ Canmore Archaeology Notes, National Record of the Historic Environment, Historic Environment Scotland, Accessed 21/02/2020. <https://canmore.org.uk/event/698958>

²¹⁹ J. D. Leslie, "Ship in the Kirk," *Scotland's SMT Magazine*, January 1951.

²²⁰ *Ibid.*

²²¹ *Ibid.*

²²² "Ayr Auld Kirk Historical Buildings." Accessed 01/02/2019, <https://www.auldkirk.org/historical/buildings/>; A. L. Snook, *Auld Kirk of Ayr (St. John the Baptist)* (Ayr: The Auld Kirk of Ayr, 1994), p.8.

²²³ Leslie, "Ship in the Kirk."

²²⁴ "Ayr Auld Kirk Historical Buildings." Accessed 01/02/2019.



Figure 5: *Arethusa* model in Ayr Auld Kirk, hanging above the seating loft

The model's maker is unknown, as are the exact circumstances of its arrival in the church, but it is significant that the new model chosen as a replacement to hang in front of the Sailor's Loft is that of a Royal Navy warship. In common with the extant ship models from the seventeenth century examined in the previous chapter, this ship represents sea power and international might, but not of a foreign sea power, or even a specifically Scottish sea power, but a proud new form of British sea power, inspired by the heroic deeds still being performed by Lord Nelson in the Mediterranean. The figurehead, a gold painted naval figure with an over-sized hat, a large star-shaped decoration on his chest, might well be intended as a miniature figure of Admiral Nelson himself. This model is an expression of Scotland's acceptance of, and pride in, the United Kingdom as represented by the combined strength of the British fighting fleet. It is a statement to the rest of the town that it is to the sailors that they should be grateful for providing peace, and defending the nation from invasion.

It is not likely to be coincidental that the next model to arrive in a Scottish church came two years' later, just a few miles south along the Ayrshire coast at Ardrossan. It is a unifying factor that ship models in churches are contagious; where one appears, others are sure soon to follow, the original almost certainly spotted by a like-minded visiting sailor and the idea appropriated for his home church. In any event, the model of the 50-gun frigate *Caledonia* was presented to Ardrossan parish church by William Dunlop in 1804. For the avoidance of doubt, helpfully and uniquely among the

Scottish church ship models, a brass plaque close to the model reads: 'The model of the *Caledonia* Frigate suspended from the roof of this church is the workmanship and gift of Mr William Dunlop, Late gunner's mate on board His Majesty's Ship *St Joseph* 1804.'²²⁵ This helpful attribution represses some of the rumours and folklore that accumulate around many other models.



Figure 6: Brass plaque under the *Caledonia* Model, Saltcoats The model was described in 1955 during a later restoration as:

²²⁵ As Displayed at St Cuthbert's Church, Saltcoats, Ayrshire.

evidently that of a large French frigate of the period 1790, of about 1250-1500 tons, captured by the British and re-armed with 24-pounder and 32-pounder carronades, 50 in all. Evidence of her French origin is seen in the forecastle bulwarks, and in her comparative lack of sheer. British frigates did not adopt these features till near the close of the Napoleonic War. The model bears evidence of having been built probably by an able-seaman. Everything in-board is meticulously exact, as is evidenced by the ringbolts and eyebolts for the gun tackles, and what remains of her original rigging. Outboard, too, details are exact down to the water-line, and there, as is the case with many sailor-built models, lack of knowledge of the underwater shape leads to inaccuracies.²²⁶

The model was originally hung from a chain over the central aisle of the old church of Ardrossan, a gap between the fore and main masts indicates where the bolt for attaching the chain would have been located. The model maker and his family were granted seats in the loft nearby in gratitude.²²⁷ The model maker's grandson wrote to the church a century later at the time that the kirk session was planning the building of the present church.²²⁸ The grandson was moved and inspired to write to the Session by a special sermon given by the minister to the sailors and fishermen and reproduced in the local newspaper. He wrote from London to the church offering to pay for the repair and upkeep of the model, and recalled:

I never heard much as to the history of the ship. My grandfather made it and gave it as a thank offering to the Church and appears to have said no more about it afterwards. The little round brass tablet was engraved by the Minister and Elders at the time. And when I was a boy at the Parish School in Saltcoats the Session Clerk made a search in the old records to see what the deliberations were when the ship was accepted by the Church. But could not find any minute thereof. So far as I know the brass tablet is the only record.²²⁹

The brass plaque, however, does not prevent other forms of folklore from being created. Despite the maker's grandson writing that he does not recall his grandfather mentioning the model, there is nevertheless a story about William Dunlop making the

²²⁶ W. Lees, *Model of Captured French Frigate, St Cuthbert's Church, Saltcoats, Ayr* (Saltcoats, 1959).

²²⁷ Leslie, "Ship in the Kirk," p.46.

²²⁸ Ardrossan Kirk Session: Minute Book, "Records of Ardrossan/Saltcoats, St Cuthbert's/Saltcoats, St Cuthbert's South Beach Kirk Session, 1904-1927," Records of Church of Scotland synods, presbyteries and kirk sessions, CH2/1033/14, Church of Scotland, National Records of Scotland, Saltcoats, 19 December 1904.

²²⁹ Ardrossan Kirk Session: Minute Book.

model as thanksgiving for surviving a near miss during battle. One version describes Dunlop as having been:

taken by the Press Gang and rose to be a gunner's mate on board the man-o-war, *Caledonia*, and that it is a replica of the Spanish ship *San Josef*, captured from the Spaniards in 1797 and aboard which Nelson received the swords of the vanquished Spanish officers. An account given by a great-grandson of Dunlop, however, maintains that Dunlop served on the captured ship, renamed the *St Joseph*; and his version agrees with the others in saying that the Saltcoats sailor made the model and presented it to the church as a thank-offering for his escape when an enemy shot shattered his berth as he lay in his hammock, leaving him unharmed. When the model was presented to the church in 1804, Dunlop headed a public procession himself pushing a barrow on which his model was mounted; and in accepting the gift, the church authorities granted the donor and his family the free use of one of the long seats in the Sailor's Loft.²³⁰

Unfortunately, the Trafalgar Roll, which is a list maintained by the National Archives of all those on the payroll of the Royal Navy during that period, does not list a William Dunlop, and there are no other records of the procession.²³¹ The surviving kirk session minutes begin in 1832 and therefore do not cover the 1804 donation period.

²³⁰ Leslie, "Ship in the Kirk," p.46.

This is also repeated by Harley, *Church Ships: a Handbook of Votive and Commemorative Models.*, p.23

²³¹ The National Archives, Richmond, Surrey, "Trafalgar Ancestors." Accessed: 11/05/2015. <http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/trafalgarancestors/default.asp>

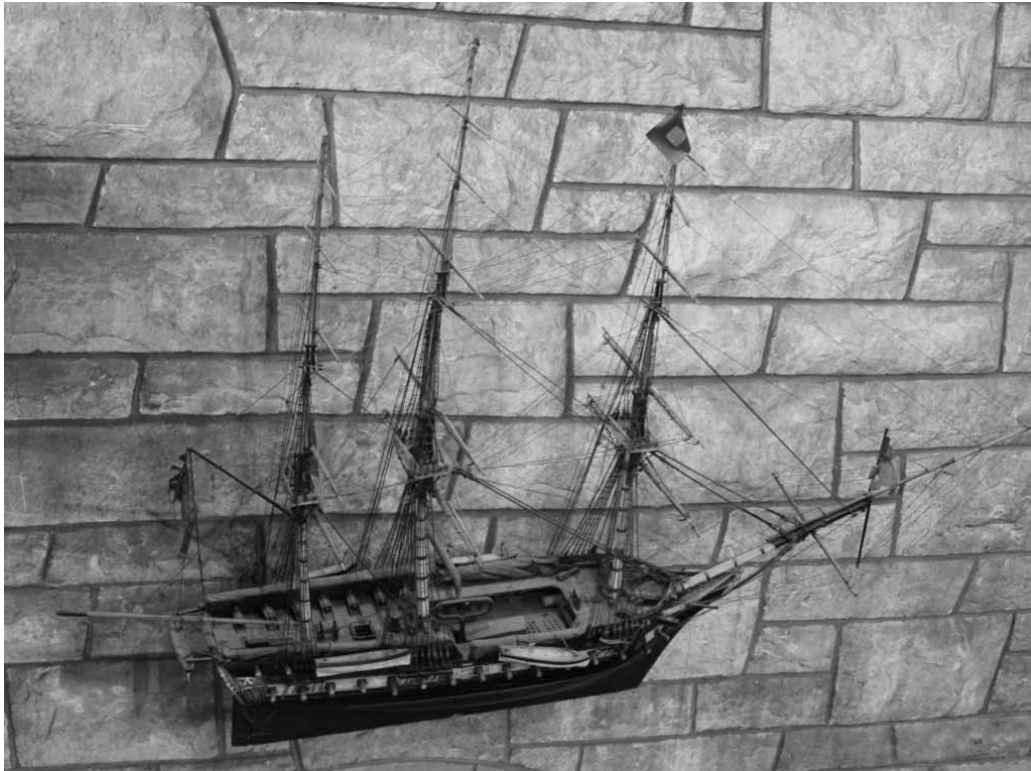


Figure 7: *Caledonia* model at St Cuthbert's Parish Church, Saltcoats

This lack of recorded evidence for the origins and meanings of the models is typical and borne out by the research undertaken into other models. It appears that, whilst permission to hang a model in the church would have been required from the kirk session, and probably the minister, there are almost no recorded discussions or acknowledgements of that permission in the kirk session minutes. This is perhaps surprising given that to install the model at such a height in the centre of the church would require scaffolding and the efforts of several people. There would be logistical and financial implications from the decision, and yet an examination of the minute books invariably provides no insight as to the discussion or even recording of the offer and acceptance. Instead, kirk session minutes at this period, where they do survive, focus on the moral misdemeanours of the parishioners, in particular ante-nuptial fornication and irregular marriages, and the financial management of the church. This lack of formal recording can lead to the conflating of facts and dates about the models, linked as they so often are, with the construction of Sailor's Lofts and other renovations to church buildings. When the old church at Ardrossan needed to be replaced, a

new parish church was built just along the road at Saltcoats.²³² In 1908, the ship model was transferred to the new building and to its present location, attached to a pillar by a metal bracket at the rear of the nave close to and on a level with the gallery seating. A note from the kirk session minutes of 7 December 1908 records that the 'Moderator proposed that Ship be transferred to New Church and hung up on second main couple at Gallery', which is one of the few references to a ship model in any of the minutes of a kirk session.²³³

This research has identified a pattern of hanging a model in a church, often as a replacement for an older model, and then moving the model to a new church during renovations. This occurred in churches throughout the nineteenth century and is a major factor in why models became damaged or lost completely.

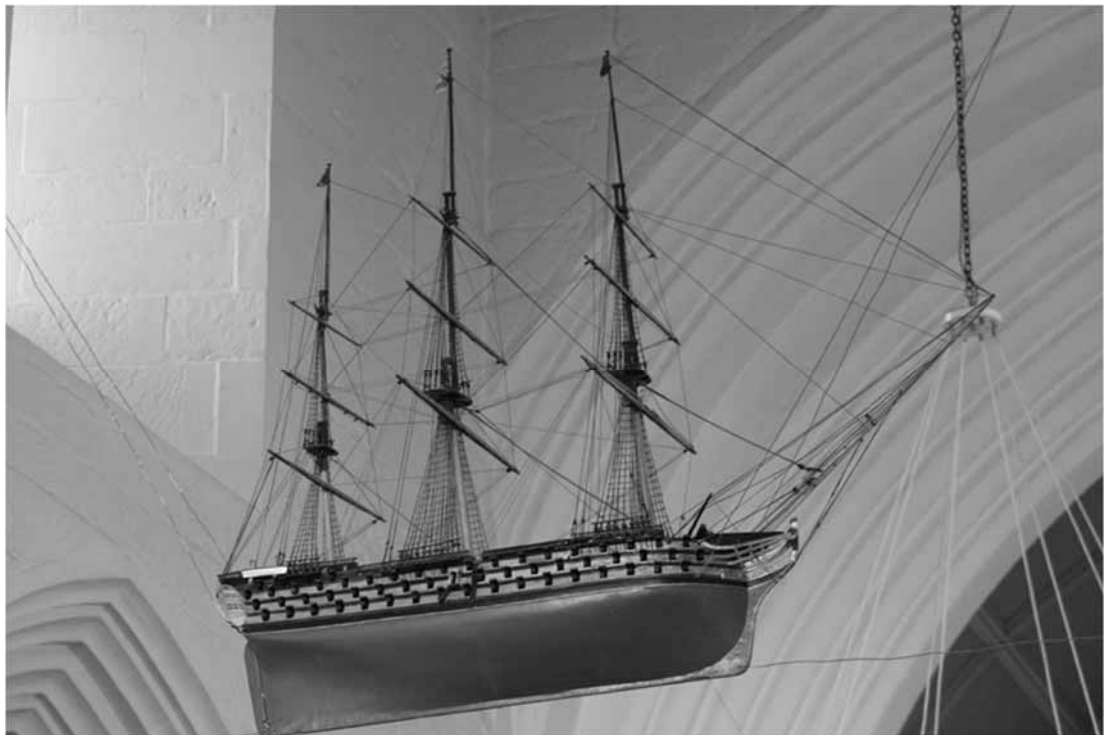


Figure 8: *Mars*, St Monans Parish Church, Fife

The third of the Napoleonic-era ship models is that of the 120-gun 1st rate warship HMS *Mars* hanging in St Monans²³⁴ church in Fife. This model has a typically con-

²³² Ardrossan Kirk Session: Minute Book.

²³³ *Ibid.*

²³⁴ Current spelling of the place name St Monans has been used in this thesis; however, the archaic spelling of St Monance is used where it is a direct quotation.

flated and confused history and was lost from the church for many decades following building work. St Monans, like Kinghorn Parish Church, was built very close to the sea. Visitors have to cross a small tributary to reach the church and the coastal footpath passes between the churchyard wall and the rocky beach. The church building dates from the fourteenth century; however, although the kirk session minutes begin in 1597,²³⁵ there is nothing in the church records in 1804 to confirm the name of the model maker or when the model was first introduced into the church, and consequently several stories have developed over the years.²³⁶ What is known is that the model is of a type of vessel introduced into the Royal Navy around 1810, and is similar in type to HMS *Caledonia*.²³⁷ It is said to have been made by a local sailor named William Marr, who is sometimes described as a captain who served on board HMS *Mars* during the Battle of Trafalgar in 1805.²³⁸ Evidence for this is scant, however; the Trafalgar Roll gives a William Marr aged 20 from the nearby city port of Dundee serving on board HMS *Swiftsure* in 1804.²³⁹ A letter from the brother of the man who restored the model prior to its rehang in the church in 1905 recalls a particularly romantic story about its maker:

‘Captain Marr who belonged to St Monance and he was captain of a naval frigate. During his captaincy he earned prize money which only came to him after his crew had been “paid off” and he was unable to trace them. This money which did not belong to him was used to have a model of his ship made and presented to his kirk. What we do know for

²³⁵ St Monans/St Monance Old Kirk Session, Minutes, 1597-1640, Virtual Volumes, National Records Scotland, Records of Church of Scotland synods, presbyteries and kirk sessions, CH2/1056/1, Church of Scotland, St Andrew's University Library.

²³⁶ A proposal dated 4 September 1805 to install seating in the kirk is the only reference to church fabrics in this period: St Monans/St Monance Old Kirk Session, Minutes, 1872-1939, Virtual Volumes, National Records Scotland, Records of Church of Scotland synods, presbyteries and kirk sessions, CH2/1056/7/204, Church of Scotland, St Andrew's University Library.

²³⁷ Correspondence dated 8 February 1988 from Simon Stephens, Department of Ships and Antiquities, to I. A. Reekie, St Monans, reproduced in St Monans parish church alongside other information about the history of the church.

²³⁸ Leslie, "Ship in the Kirk," pp.44-5, also repeated in A. Fyall, *St Monans: history customs & superstitions* (Edinburgh: Pentland Press, 1999).

²³⁹ Archives, "Trafalgar Ancestors." Accessed: 11/05/2015.

certain is that the model was there before the kirk was restored in 1828 and that it was sold along with other timber, etc. at that time.²⁴⁰

To complicate things, a search of the Trafalgar Roll reveals that there was a Lieutenant James Black from Anstruther, just a very few miles away from St Monans along the coast, who did serve on board HMS *Mars* at the Battle of Trafalgar in 1805, and he later gained the rank of captain. Captain Black was a son of an Admiral, and brother of a Rear Admiral, and therefore it might be argued that he came from a family background of suitable wealth and status to commission and install a model of his former ship on which he served at what must surely have counted as the greatest moment of his naval career. In the popular version of the story, William Marr is described as having served under 'Admiral Sir James Black', which conflates Marr, James Black and his brother, the Rear Admiral William Black.²⁴¹ On William Black's memorial stone, he is described as Rear Admiral and the stone is dedicated to him by his brother Captain James Black, although there is no evidence that James ever achieved the rank of Admiral.²⁴² It is not possible, due to the lack of recorded evidence, to say for certain where the truth lies, but it is quite likely to be a combination of both stories; that *Mars* represents both the naval vessel HMS *Mars*, one of the ships present at Nelson's victory and the moment of his death, and possibly also the name of another local sailor, which may also be the model's maker, William Marr. The model itself was lost to the church for over 70 years, taken down and sold with timbers from the church, or possibly stolen, during renovations of the church in 1828.²⁴³ The model was later sold to Edinburgh artist Samuel Bough, a fellow of the Royal Scottish Academy, and then bought by another fellow Royal Scottish Academician, William Fleming Vallance.²⁴⁴ The long-standing minister of St Monans, Rev Dr Turnbull, identified the model as being that

²⁴⁰ Copy of a letter written by the late W. Miller, OBE, JP, Session Clerk at St Monans Parish Church to F. K. S. Patridge, Esq., Art Research Editor Publishing Projects, The Reader's Digest Association Ltd, London, 27/10/1972, reproduced in St Monans parish church alongside other information about the history of the church.

²⁴¹ Leslie, "Ship in the Kirk," p.44; repeated in Fyall, *St Monans*.

²⁴² East Anstruther Parish Church, D. Hay Fleming, "Guide to the East Neuk of Fife: Embracing all the towns and villages, antiquities and places of interest between Fifeness and Leven, etc. [with plates and a map]," (Cupar: John Innes, Fife Herald Office, 1886), p.52.

²⁴³ Leslie, "Ship in the Kirk"; copy of letter from Miller to Patridge, 27/10/1972, reproduced in St Monans parish church alongside other information about the history of the church (see n.240). Fyall's account suggests the model may have been stolen, Fyall, *St Monans*, p.52.

²⁴⁴ Fyall, *St Monans*.

formerly belonging to the church and approached Vallance to ask for its return.²⁴⁵ Vallance apparently turned down the request and it was not until the artists' death in 1904 that his widow was approached by a local Pittenweem artist, John Lorimer, who was able to purchase the model from her. Lorimer and Rev Turnbull then arranged for the model to be restored and rehung in the church with a service to mark the occasion. The model was unveiled by the oldest member of the church, described as a local washer-woman, Miss Lucy Allison, on a Sunday in March 1905.²⁴⁶ Also displayed in a frame on the wall of the church is the 'Common Seal of St Monance', a wooden painted plaque dated 1792 depicting a scene in which people are seated in a small boat, with a saint or holy vision hovering in clouds above them, surrounded by the motto 'Mare Vivimus' (We live by the sea) and 'Grip Fast'. The small brass plaque on the frame reads, 'Removed from gallery of church during alterations in 1828 – Framed and restored by Mrs Francis Henderson, London, December 1935.' This panel, similar in style to those surrounding the lofts at Burntisland Parish Church, was another remnant from the former church layout, and is reported to have been used in a shop window display at a local grocer in the town.²⁴⁷



Figure 9: *Surviving loft panel at St Monans Parish Church*

²⁴⁵ Copy of letter from Miller to Patridge, 27/10/1972, reproduced in St Monans parish church alongside other information about the history of the church (see n.240).

²⁴⁶ *Ibid.*

²⁴⁷ *Ibid.*

As can be seen at Ayr and St Monans, church renovations could be catastrophic for ship models. The older model at Ayr disappeared completely following the works undertaken in 1802, and was replaced by a newer version. The St Monans model disappeared for over 70 years before returning to the church. The model at Ardrossan/Saltcoats was fortunate to have had champions, firstly in the form of the minister who used it in his sermon, which was then republished in the local newspaper, and then in the grandson of the model maker who read about how the model was still cherished by its church and provided the funds for it to be re-rigged. This renewed interest in the model meant that come the time of the move into the new church the community felt more connected to it and its history as demonstrated by its new place in the nave with its plaque and the typed history of the report was added in 1959.²⁴⁸

4.2 *Aberdeen and the Post-war Boom*

The post-war rebuilding and church renovations of the 1820s are indicators of resurgent coastal communities. No longer losing sailors to the wartime press gangs, and able to export to the continent once more, coastal cities such as Aberdeen began to grow again in population and wealth. In Aberdeen this renewed vigour could be seen in the grand scale rebuilding of the city centre, in particular the viaduct over the Denburn and the construction on Union Street.²⁴⁹ The population of the city, already increased at the end of the eighteenth century by the move away from purely agricultural exports and small-scale cottage production to urban textile factories employing thousands, grew further with the additional labour required for the mammoth scheme.²⁵⁰ In 1811, Thomas Telford proposed a plan for diverting the river Dee and transforming the harbour thereby massively increasing the number and volume of ships able to load and unload into the city centre.²⁵¹ High and low lights were constructed at the harbour mouth, and a lighthouse was built at Girdleness in 1833. The

²⁴⁸ Lees, *Model of Captured French Frigate*.

²⁴⁹ R. MacInnes, "Union Street and the 'Great Street' in Scottish Planning," in T. Brotherstone and Donald J. Withrington (eds.), *The City and its Worlds: Aspects of Aberdeen's History since 1794* (Glasgow: Cruithne Press, 1996), p.36.

²⁵⁰ C. Lee, "Aberdeen 1800-2000AD: the evolution of the urban economy," in Brotherstone and Withrington, *The City and its Worlds*, p.211.

²⁵¹ Plan by Thomas Telford Showing Aberdeen Harbour, Drawn In 1810 And Amended In 1826, ABDMS039336, Aberdeen Art Gallery & Museums.

result was that between 1800 and 1830 Aberdeen's built landscape changed beyond recognition, with a corresponding increase in shipping and maritime trades.²⁵²

The extensive building of new houses and the consequent increase in population required new churches to be built to accommodate their new residents. These new churches in turn also required a restructure of the church management.²⁵³ Up until this point the city centre churches were split between the cathedral church at Old Machar (St Machar's Cathedral) and the two churches of St Nicholas; East and West. The new structure saw six *quoad civilia* churches constructed, which were supported financially by the city's magistrates, and nine *quoad sacra* churches built. These 'daughter' churches were of a lesser status than the *quoad civilia* churches, and unable to appoint elders or to send a representative to Presbytery or attend church courts.²⁵⁴ Of the six *quoad civilia* churches, 'the elite congregation was the West Church, followed by South and East Churches. The other three congregations were less well off. St Clement's catered for a fishing and seafaring community, and North and Greyfriars had particularly large areas of working-class slums within their bounds.'²⁵⁵ There followed a period of church building works which saw some of the smaller and decaying chapels in those areas transformed into modern churches.

St Clement's church was built in 1828 as a replacement for one such fifteenth-century chapel that was no longer adequate for the needs of the local population.²⁵⁶ The Aberdonian architect, John Smith, who had become Master of Works in 1824 and who was responsible, along with Archibald Simpson, for the newly expanded Aberdeen city centre, designed the new church of St Clement. St Clement is the patron saint of fishermen and sailors and the new church was built just a short walk from the harbour to the south, and the sea to the east, and surrounded on all sides by fishing and ship-building industries, which only increased in size and number as the century progressed. At the opening of the new church a local craftsman; James Welsh donated a

²⁵² J. S. Smith, "Aberdeen Harbour - The Taming of the Dee," in J. S. Smith and David Stevenson (eds.), *Aberdeen in the Nineteenth Century: the making of the modern city* (Aberdeen: Aberdeen University Press, 1988), p.103.

²⁵³ MacLaren, "Religion and Social Class," p.52.

²⁵⁴ *Ibid.*

²⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, p.54.

²⁵⁶ Gammie, *The Churches of Aberdeen*, p.56.

ship model to hang in the church. Welsh is described in the census of 1841 as a stone-cutter, while he described himself elsewhere as a joiner and shipbuilder, lived locally in Commerce Street, and was the son of the city's hangman.²⁵⁷ Although the new church was in the heart of the harbour and fishing area of Footdee, the church had no recorded links to a sailor's benevolent society, and in so far as the entire church would have been filled each service with sailors, shipmasters, ship owners, and others in industries supporting the maritime trades such as ropemaking, there was no designated 'sailor's loft' or similar seating arrangement recorded. In this respect, and in several others, Welsh is unique and his models mark a distinct change from previous Scottish built church ship models. Welsh did not have a background as a sailor, unlike William Dunlop and the makers of the *Caledonia* and *Mars* models, but he went on to build models for two other churches in the city, at least one of which was a commission.²⁵⁸ He can therefore be claimed to be the first named professional ship model maker in Scotland. The model he presented to St Clement's Church was of a Royal Navy ship named HMS *Belvidera* (see Case Study 3). The ship had become world famous in 1812 for firing the first shots of the American War of 1812-1815.²⁵⁹ There is no evidence to suggest that Welsh had ever seen the actual vessel, and this is borne out by the exaggerated shape and size of the model when compared to other representations of the fifth-rate Apollo class ship, for example those reproduced in engravings of the encounter, which found their way into the popular press. Welsh's model incorporates a figurehead of a highlander in a kilt, but unlike his later models, the *Belvidera* has no other figures on board. The following year, however, Welsh received a commission from Captain Affleck to build a model for another new church being built in the burgeoning outer suburb of Nigg, a settlement beyond the newly fashionable west and south sides of the city. At the top of a hill with views across to the sea, the city, and the River Dee to the north, Nigg, like St Clement's, was built to replace a now derelict older church of St Fitticks. Newspaper accounts of the opening of the church record:

²⁵⁷ L. Wyness, "Ships of Faith," *Aberdeen Leopard, The Grampian Magazine*, 1991, p.6; J. L. Duthie, "Hangman's Son Carved His Fame," *Aberdeen Evening Express* (Aberdeen) 1982.

²⁵⁸ See case studies for Phesdo and Agnes Oswald models.

²⁵⁹ See the collections of Royal Museums Greenwich for examples of paintings and prints showing the incident. <https://collections.rmg.co.uk/>

On Sunday last the new church of the parish of Nigg was opened for divine service; by the Rev. Mr. Thom: on which occasion a collection was made for the poor of the parish, which, we are happy to say, amounted to above £10. The church is a beautiful gothic structure, with a tower of considerable altitude, flanked by angular buttresses, and forms a very striking object viewed from this side of the Dee. The interior is very handsomely finished, and contains sittings for about 1000 hearers. By the liberality of Convenor Affleck, a very elegant and perfect model of a ship of war has been provided, and is hung from the roof of the church - an appropriate ornament where so large a part of the population lead a seafaring life.²⁶⁰

The model is called *Phesdo* (see Case Study 4), with the name and date 1829 painted on a tin flag on the main mast. For a long time, the model was credited with representing a Royal Navy vessel 'of the same class as Nelson's *Victory*', although there has never been a naval ship of the name *Phesdo*. At the stern another large tin flag is painted with the dedication; 'The Gift of Captain Affleck, The New Parish of Nigg, June 7th 1829'. However, 'Captain Affleck' was in fact the church convenor Andrew Affleck, a boot and shoemaker who was Deacon of the Shoemaker Incorporation, and certainly no sailor.²⁶¹ It may be that convenor Affleck was styling himself as captain of the church, although this is a role more usually ascribed to God. The model of *Phesdo*, even more so than the model of *Belvidera*, demonstrates Welsh's creativity and imagination. Not since the model given to King James VI in 1590 had a model been given to a church that was not attempting to depict a specific vessel, however inaccurately, but rather the *Phesdo* is a glorious fantasy of a ship. As well as the over-sized dimensions of the ship itself, on board *Phesdo* are fifteen figures of sailors plus a very large seagull; the first time on any of the models that human figures have been included and the first time for any animal as well. The crewmen are arranged around the vessel in different roles, several are standing to attention in the rigging manning unlikely-looking guns in the fighting tops on the topgallants; one figure is standing in each of the small boats and others on deck, wearing white trousers, pale blue frock coats with dark neckerchiefs and black hats. Some are clearly marines holding rifles with bayonets. One figure is keeping watch from the forecastle using a telescope which is blocked by the enormous seagull standing on the rails. The model has been repainted in recent years with

²⁶⁰ "Opening of Nigg Parish Church," *Aberdeen Journal*, 10 June 1829, p.3.

²⁶¹ Duthie, "Hangman's Son Carved His Fame."

bright contrasting colours that enhance the impression of an overblown, whimsical model. The model has such charm and character about it, however, that to judge it on its failings as an accurate representation of a ship would be to miss its merits as an outstanding piece of maritime folk art.²⁶² As a named artist, Welsh might be more properly considered in the realms of 'outsider art...a self-taught artist working in a particularly idiosyncratic, highly individual manner, often driven by compulsion, desire or religious fervour',²⁶³ more so than 'folk art [which] is rarely seen as the function of individual genius but rather as the expression of a collective voice.'²⁶⁴



Figure 10: *Phesdo, Nigg Parish Church, 1965* ²⁶⁵When Nigg Parish church closed in 2000 and the model was taken down, two notes were found in its hull. One was a handwritten note reading, *James Welsh, shipbuilder, Aberdeen*. The other describes an incident which nearly demolished the model, and is illustrative of the type of occurrence that may account for the loss of other models:

²⁶² H. J. Hansen, *Art and the Seafarer: a historical survey of the arts and crafts of sailors and shipwrights* ([S.l.]: Faber and Faber, 1968), p.251.

²⁶³ Kenny, McMillan and Myrone, *British Folk Art*, p.12.

²⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, p.129.

²⁶⁵ Copyright Aberdeen Art Gallery & Museums Collections.

Ship in Church of Nigg - Was presented by a Captain Affleck when the church was built in the year 1829. It is supposed to be a piece of valuable work. Some years ago when the church was being re-painted a number of boys got into the church and commenced to throw books at the ship and destroyed it. It was repaired and cost between 20 & 30 pounds to put it right again. The parents of the boys paid the account and the matter was hushed up. It was only then that they realised the value of the ship. Andrew Main.²⁶⁶

There is no date on the note, but it is interesting that by this time the value of the model was only appreciated when the repair was given a financial value. Whatever the model's original significance as a link to maritime trades and local sailors, this symbolic value was no longer a consideration.

James Welsh's last surviving model was presented by him to another relatively new church in the city of Aberdeen. The model, called *Agnes Oswald* (see Case Study 5), was given to Gilcomston chapel of ease, a daughter church of Old Machar, in honour of the church's charismatic preacher Rev James Kidd, possibly at the time of his seventieth birthday, in 1830. Coming just a year after the *Phesdo* arrived in Nigg Parish Church, the *Agnes Oswald*, named after the Rev Dr Kidd's daughter, is another tour-de-force in fantastical maritime sculpture. This time Welsh incorporated fragments of blue and white china to form the large figurehead of a woman wearing an elaborate hat. Figures on board include an Admiral waving from the quarter galleries, wearing a white wig, possibly intended to represent Reverend Kidd himself. Kidd was a very well-known figure in the city.²⁶⁷ An Irishman who came late to the ministry having worked in America, and a self-taught Hebrew scholar, Dr Kidd, or The Doctor as he was referred to around Aberdeen, came to the city to teach Hebrew at the university in 1793, and completed his theological training at Marischal College.²⁶⁸ He soon began to preach in an ad-hoc basis at the new Trinity Chapel on Shiprow, until he was given the role of minister at Gilcomston church in 1801. Kidd oversaw the transition of the church from chapel of ease to parish church in its own right: 'By an Act of the General Assembly in 1834, Gilcomston was constituted a 'quoad sacra' parish, with power to elect its own

²⁶⁶ Now in the collections of Aberdeen Art Gallery and Museums, acc. No. ABDMS091210.

²⁶⁷ D. Masson, *Memories of Two Cities: Edinburgh and Aberdeen* (Edinburgh: Oliphant, Anderson & Ferrier, 1911), pp.201-33

²⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, p.210

kirk session to take control of its own congregational affairs.²⁶⁹ Although the church was only a *quoad sacra* church, and therefore not of the same high status as the other *quoad civilia* churches, such as the East and West Churches at St Nicholas,²⁷⁰ Dr Kidd soon increased the congregation to almost 2,000 members.²⁷¹ His immense popularity arose not only from his down to earth preaching style, using the language of the ordinary working man, but also because of his willingness to break the rules and go up against the church management.²⁷² He made himself very unpopular with the kirk session, and a hero to his congregation, when he made a point of handing out the monies given at evening services to the poor of the parish, thereby circumventing the correct procedures, which should have seen the monies collected and distributed via the session's own poor funds.²⁷³ He also established the first Sabbath Schools in the city. So popular was Dr Kidd that busts were made of him, not only for the church, but also miniatures for people of the city to have at home in honour of the great man.²⁷⁴

²⁶⁹ Gammie, *The Churches of Aberdeen*, p.19.

²⁷⁰ MacLaren, "Religion and Social Class," p.93.

²⁷¹ Gammie, *The Churches of Aberdeen*, p.19.

²⁷² MacLaren, "Religion and Social Class," p.73.

²⁷³ *Ibid.*

²⁷⁴ Masson, *Memories of Two Cities*, p.203.



Figure 11: *Agnes Oswald* at an exhibition celebrating 125 Years of Aberdeen Art Gallery²⁷⁵

The *Agnes Oswald* model is very similar in style to the *Phesdo* at Nigg. If anything, it is gaudier, brighter and with even more fantastical elements, such as the serpentine beast head carved under the tops on the main mast, although sadly no seagull. Other familiar figures are included, however, such as the sailor on the forecastle with a look out telescope, although this figure has been turned to face back along the ship, possibly as the result of some later restoration work. Many of the figures wave their hats in salute. It is a characterful model, and was perhaps fitting for the larger than life character of Dr Kidd.

A less colourful, albeit just as beloved, minister was also honoured with a ship model along the coast south of Aberdeen at the small hamlet of Portlethen. Rev William Law was a local school teacher and son of a farmer in Aberdeenshire before becoming the first ordained minister for Portlethen Chapel in 1840. The chapel was elevated to the status of parish church in 1853 and Rev Law remained minister there until his death in 1870.²⁷⁶ The model is of a clipper ship, and is the first of the Scottish church ship models that did not represent a fighting vessel. Named *William Law* (see Case Study 6), after the minister to whom it was presented, it is a more sober and re-

²⁷⁵ Copyright Aberdeen Art Gallery & Museums Collections.

²⁷⁶ B. & S. Beverly, *30 Years at Portlethen: the day book, 1840-1869 of the Rev. William Law* (Aberdeen: Aberdeen & North East Family History Society, 1993), p.8.

strained model than the showy flourishes of James Welsh's tributes. However, it has the graceful lines of the clipper ship and its restraint in style befits the economy of décor in the church itself. The model hangs centrally above the dais with the communion table almost immediately below, and in front of a stained-glass window, which in one corner has a tribute to the trawlers that served as minesweepers and anti-aircraft vessels during the two world wars. Rev. Law kept a day book, a form of work diary, throughout his 30 years of ministry at Portlethen.²⁷⁷ In it, he recounts numerous shipwrecks and losses of boats from the village, or of ships passing the coast. In these entries he lists the names of local men drowned that he has buried, as well as recording the numbers of vessels lost in storms. The toll over the period of his tenure is great, and with almost every loss the minister called for the gathering of funds to help the surviving families. One such storm was recorded in his day book for the first of January 1844:

this day all the fishing boats were overtaken by a sudden and unexpected gale about 9 o'clock am, attended during the day by snow, all of which were accounted for by 10pm, except 5 belonging to Findon, of which no account could be obtained. It was hoped that they had been picked up by one of Her Majesty's Cutters, passing to the southward that day - storm off land, attended by high wind and severe frost - First of the boats, one belonging to Portlethen only reached home about 4pm, having first landed near Bervie. 2nd Jan. Accounts have just been received (this day) 5pm that the 5 boat crews missing yesterday and belonging to Findon were landed at Arbroath, having been picked up about 14 miles from land by the *Thetis* of Dundee, Capt. Aitken, Commander, who treated them with great kindness, boat lines etc. all lost. 3rd Jan. Remaining fishermen came home this day - 9 boats belonging to Footdee and Torry (navigated by 53 men) were also lost. The men were saved by HMRC *Greyhound*, Capt. Dooley, who landed them next day at Leith. 7th January Thanksgiving offered up this day to Almighty God for his Providential Deliverance of the fishermen on Monday last - many present.²⁷⁸

On 16 January, he 'wrote all the Heritors of the Parish for Findon Fishers' loss' to raise money for them.²⁷⁹ This care for the fishermen and sailors who lost their lives along the coast so close to the church, as well as efforts to provide for their families and for

²⁷⁷ *Ibid.*

²⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, p.66.

²⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, p.66.

those fishermen who lost their livelihoods by the loss of their boat or nets, may in part be the source of one legend regarding the model. As with previous models, regardless of date, this model has attracted its own origin mythology. Rev Law, with his background in school teaching, was also a lifelong supporter of education in the district and it may be this involvement with, and encouragement of, students that has created the story about the model's arrival; it is said to have been given:

by one of a party of students who were en route by sea from Leith to, presumably, Aberdeen, when their vessel was caught in a violent storm and wrecked just off Findon. They all succeeded in scrambling ashore but unfortunately the local people were somewhat suspicious of them and would have nothing to do with them. News of their plight reached Mr Law who was quickly on the scene and immediately attended to all their needs and after seeing them warmed, fed and rested, arranged for the resumption of their journey to their destination. As a token of their appreciation and gratitude for the Christian care and concern shown by Mr Law, the model of their ship was made and presented to Mr Law.²⁸⁰

It seems more likely, as recalled in a local newspaper account of 1938, that the model was given to Rev. Law by a student who had been staying with him, and that Rev. Law then presented the model to the church, whose members had it installed.²⁸¹ It is interesting to note that while this model is the first that did not to represent a warship or Royal Navy vessel, it is still not representative of the local craft of the area, which were generally much smaller fishing boats. Clipper ships are more closely associated with the history of Aberdeen, and with wealth and international trade at that time, and would have been a familiar sight passing the little hamlet of Portlethen, but it is not representative of the working lives of the majority of sailors, mostly fishermen, who lived, worked and worshipped at Portlethen. That expression of pride in the humbler working lives of maritime communities would not be seen in churches until the turn of the twentieth century.

²⁸⁰ L. Andrew, *Re. Church Ship Model* [Email]. Message sent to M. Greiling (m.greiling@2013.hul.ac.uk) 25/05/2016, 16:46.

²⁸¹ "Portlethen Church Rededication on Sunday," *Press and Journal* (Aberdeen), 24 November 1938, p.5.

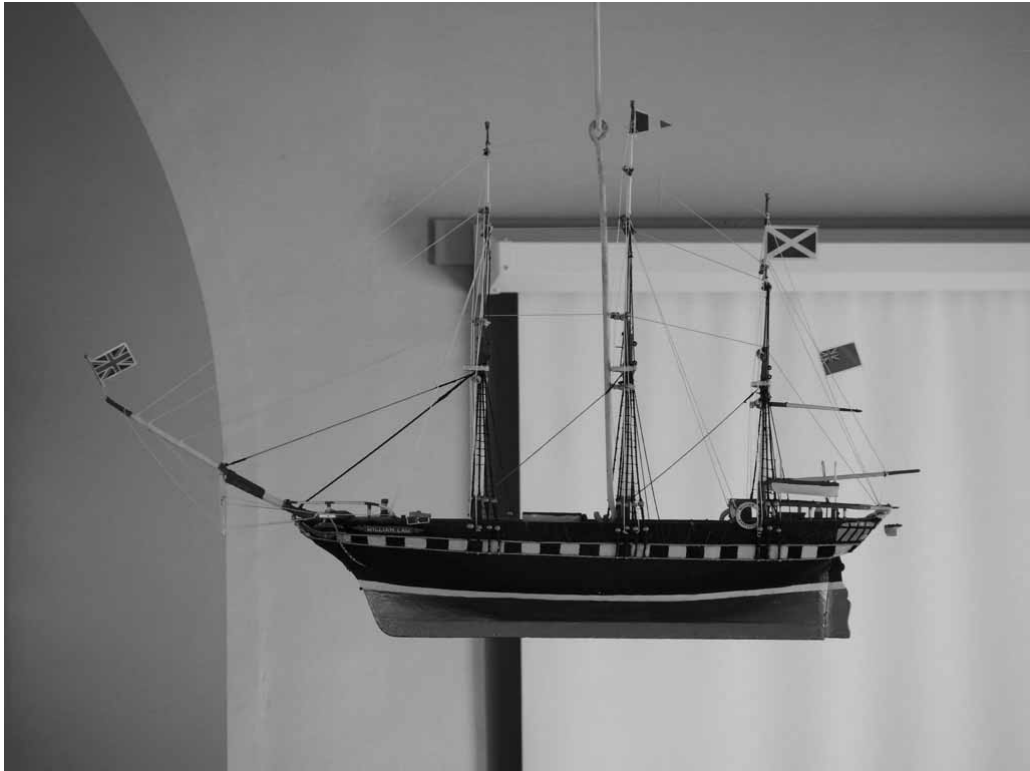


Figure 12: *William Law* model at Portlethen Parish Church

As we have already seen in this chapter, the new building and renovations of churches often meant the loss or damage of models. This is the likely explanation for what happened to the eighteenth-century church ship models, such as the *Bon Accord*, made in 1739 for St Paul's Episcopal Church in Aberdeen, which is recorded in the history of Aberdeen Shipmasters Society.²⁸² The Society history states that the model was taken down and moved to the Society's new building on Commerce Street in 1840,²⁸³ when the church fell victim to the gentrification of the city centre. At Burntisland Parish Church, one of the first churches built after the Reformation, and the church in which King James ordered a new Bible to be written, a model is recorded to have been removed during the building work to the church in 1822; 'It has often been said that a model ship was suspended from the hook above the east gallery...Mrs Balingall told me her father, for 50 years Session-Clerk, often spoke of it.'²⁸⁴ This model was not replaced until 1962, when a new model was installed (see Case Study 16). St Monans lost

²⁸² Clark, *A Short History of the Shipmaster Society*, p.27.

²⁸³ *Ibid.*, p.65.

²⁸⁴ A. Young, *History of Burntisland: Scottish burgh life more particularly in the time of the Stuarts* (Kirkcaldy: Fifeshire Advertiser Ltd, 1913), p.146.

their model during renovations in 1828 as already discussed. Tulliallan Kincardine Parish Church opened in 1833, because, like St Clement's and Nigg Parish Church, the old church was considered to be too small and in such a state of decay that a new building was necessary.²⁸⁵

The old church evidently had a model hanging in it, associated with the local Sailor's Box Society, as referenced in a poem by a local sailor; 'the sailor-poet of Tulliallan - Captain Robert Peter - on 17 August 1836, when his ship was at anchor off Settra Krou:

...Where now the Sailor's Loft where often came
those hardy men who plough the stormy main
where often times the home returned tar
would view these scenes he longed for from afar?
Where is the Ship which from the ceiling hung?²⁸⁶

The model was eventually replaced by a ship model named *William Gibb* (see Case Study 17), which had been recovered from the lumber room of a local hotel that the Shipowners' and the shipmasters' Society used as a club house.²⁸⁷ It was believed to be the model that had originally hung in the old church. The model was removed from the hotel for cleaning, re-rigging and repainting, and installed on the centenary of the new church in 1933. At which time a great correspondence was initiated in the *Scotsman* newspaper on the history of the model. The initial article stated:

The model used to hang in the Sailor's Loft in the old church, but when the new church was built a hundred years ago there was no Sailors' Loft and the ship was taken by its owners, the Sailors' Box Society, to the Commercial Hotel which they used as a club.²⁸⁸

Three days later this was corrected by another writer, who claimed it was not the same model from the old church, but rather that it was 'made by Captain William Gibb, a native of Kincardine, which he named the *Wm Gibb* after his Grandfather.'²⁸⁹ The rather confused narrative that these articles present is that the old model was moved to

²⁸⁵ Rev. W. Meiklejohn, *A Triad of Churches: the three churches of Tulliallan* (Tulliallan: Tulliallan and Kincardine Parish Church, 1983), p.21.

²⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, pp.19-20.

²⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, p.30.

²⁸⁸ *Ibid.*

²⁸⁹ *Ibid.*

the Commercial Hotel where the Sailor's Box Society met, and was seen there as late as 1858. At some time around 1870 Captain William Gibb removed the old model, perhaps with the intention of restoring it, and later replaced it at the hotel with a model of his own making. This model was then found by Colonel Mitchell who had it repainted and re-rigged and hung in the new church. A label in the church now reads:

The *William Gibb* model made about 1870 by William Gibb ship master and named after his father also a ship master. Four generations of Gibbs, all ship masters from Kincardine on Forth, span from about 1870 to the present day when Mr William Gibb of Largs commissioned the model restoration in 1996 by Sandy Cousins, C. Eng, F. I. Mar. E.²⁹⁰

Whilst there is no reference to the older model in the new church, because it never was in that church, there is still a piece of evidence of the former Sailor's Box Society that it had represented, in the form of a small brass plaque on the front of one of the loft pews directly opposite and level with the *William Gibb* model, which reads 'Ship Masters Association.'



Figure 13: *William Gibb* model above the organ at Tulliallan and Kincardine Parish Church

There is a similar story of lost and replaced models at the Old West Kirk in Greenock, also known as the Sailor's Kirk. The original sixteenth century church was

²⁹⁰ As reproduced from Tulliallan and Kincardine Parish Church.

built at the foot of the hill leading down to the Firth of Clyde, just a short distance from the water and the docks. It had a Sailor's Loft installed in 1698 at the request of the Masters of Ships and Seamen of the parish.²⁹¹ It was possibly at that time that a ship model was installed. In Weir's history of Greenock (1829) there is a description of the seamen's loft with 'a ship full rigged suspended from the roof.'²⁹² As with the churches at Ardrossan, St Clement's and Tulliallan, the old church at Greenock was considered to be too small and in a dangerous state of dilapidation.²⁹³ The perilous condition of the church fabric, and particularly the over-crowded, waterlogged and insanitary conditions of the burial ground that surrounded it, meant that it had been a cause of concern for many years, and on several occasions services had to be moved elsewhere when conditions became too hazardous.²⁹⁴ Smith records the old ship model had to be moved as the church became increasingly unsafe. He describes the old model hanging 'From the roof above the Sailors' Loft ... a model 20-gun frigate, planked and fully rigged. It fell to pieces whilst being removed in 1836.'²⁹⁵ The church was eventually closed in 1841 and the congregation moved to a new location in the heart of the town.²⁹⁶ Despite losing their minister and some members of the congregation at the Disruption in 1843,²⁹⁷ a delegation was sent to the town magistrates to request the restoration and expansion of the Old West Kirk.²⁹⁸ The church was effectively rebuilt and made larger to accommodate the growing population that had arrived in the area with the burgeoning shipyards, in particular Caird's shipbuilders, which was established in the town in 1844.²⁹⁹ The Kirk Session minute books at that time show large numbers of new communicants to the church and area, indicative of the continued

²⁹¹ Greenock Kirk Session, Minute book, 1694-1713, Records of Church of Scotland synods, presbyteries and kirk sessions, CH2/1418/7, Church of Scotland, National Records of Scotland, p.37.

²⁹² D. Weir, *History of the Town of Greenock [electronic resource]* (McLean Museum and Art Gallery, Greenock: Inverclyde Council, 2009, 1829), p.8.

²⁹³ N. Hill, *The Story of the Old West Kirk of Greenock, 1591-1898 [with plates]* (James McKelvie & Sons, Greenock, 1898), p.7.

²⁹⁴ R. M. Smith, *The History of Greenock* (Inverclyde: Inverclyde Libraries, McLean Museum and Inverclyde Archives, 2016, first published 1921), p.113.

²⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, p.111.

²⁹⁶ J. S. Bolton, *The Old West Kirk* (Greenock: The Old West Kirk, 1991), p.1.

²⁹⁷ Hill, *Story of the Old West Kirk of Greenock*, p.7.

²⁹⁸ Greenock Kirk Session, Minute Book.

²⁹⁹ Smith, *History of Greenock*, p.96.

growth in the shipbuilding industry throughout the rest of the nineteenth century, with increased populations requiring 'alterations to be made on the pews, tablecloths, etc. in order to the dispensation of the Lord's Supper.'³⁰⁰ The rebuilt Old West Kirk was opened with a service of rededication on Christmas Day 1864. Smith recounts that a model of a Clipper Ship was initially installed in the church to replace the missing ship, but that it was considered too modern and not in keeping with the history of the church, and so it was replaced with the present model of a 20-gun frigate (see Case Study 34).³⁰¹ The model was made by craftsmen from another local shipyard, from the firm of Robert Steele & Co., supposedly based on a drawing found in Charnock's *Marine Architecture* book of 1801.³⁰² It is said to have been a gift of Robert Steele Snr himself.³⁰³ This need to assert the history and ancient nature of the church, and indeed the sailor's place in the church is interesting. By declaring the clipper ship too modern, despite its obvious links to the shipbuilding industry on the Clyde and its importance to international trade and the wealth of the nation, the congregation, or at least the maritime trades represented in the church, have associated themselves with a much older tradition. There is a telling folkloric story associated with the old church and the Spanish Armada of 1588, which although it cannot be proven, is nevertheless indicative of how Greenock sees itself in relation to the sea and British maritime history.³⁰⁴ The models are frequently referred to in the church's own publications on its history as being made from the wreckage of a ship of the Spanish Armada of 1588. The current historical publication given to visitors to the church today states:

The Sailors' Loft was first built in 1670. Above hangs a scale model of a 20-gun frigate, third or fourth replacement to one reputedly made from the wreckage of a Spanish Armada galleon.³⁰⁵

The story was retold by a church elder thus:

³⁰⁰ CH2/1418/1/193 Greenock Kirk Session, Minute Book.

³⁰¹ Smith, *History of Greenock*, p.111.

³⁰² *Ibid.*, p.111.

³⁰³ Letter from Captain A. D. Munro MRIN FNI to Mrs Margaret Mackay, Greenock, 11 February 2008. Reproduced with permission of Mrs M. Mackay.

³⁰⁴ This statement is repeated by Bolton, *The Old West Kirk*, p.4, Harley, *Church Ships*, p.23, and the Old West Kirk newsletter, Autumn 2007, p.19.

³⁰⁵ Bolton, *The Old West Kirk*, p.4.

a five-foot-long “Man-O’-War” fashioned by Spanish sailors saved after their galleon was scuppered as it retreated up the West Coast of Scotland from the conflict in the English Channel in 1588. It is reputed that the wood used to make the model was saved from their wrecked galleon. The vessel was hung in the church when a Sailor’s loft (gallery) was added in 1689. Sadly, this ship suffered from age and disrepair so when the church underwent a major refurbishment in 1864 the original ship was replaced by a 20-gun frigate fashioned by Scottish craftsmen to keep the story of the Spanish Armada alive.³⁰⁶

There is no archival evidence for this event, but the story’s significance lies not in its historical accuracy, but in what it tells us about how the maritime communities see themselves and present themselves to others. These retellings, with their half-truths and almost accuracies, are typical of how ship models promote the church’s own folklore. As these stories are handed down through generations of church elders the dates vary, and the stories of rescue and thanksgiving are embellished and repeated, even as the very links to the maritime trades vanish from the town and the congregations.

Caird’s shipyard was bought out by Harland & Wolff in 1917, and they wanted to expand their harbour site, which required moving the Old West Kirk several hundred metres to a location further along the waterfront. The negotiations and deliberations took some time, as did the subsequent removal of the church stone by stone and its relocation to the new position. The church was once again reopened with a service of rededication in February 1928, and the model was moved to its current location with it. Unfortunately, the Great Depression that arrived the same year meant that no ships were ever built in the newly constructed shipyard.³⁰⁷ The choice of an already outdated representation of naval sea power (by 1864 modern warships were already being made of iron and steam powered³⁰⁸) for the newly restored church suggests that the wealthy inheritors of the Sailor’s Loft were associating themselves once again with naval might and international superiority, in the tradition of Lord Nelson, albeit a fictional fighting vessel, rather than commerce and trade.

³⁰⁶ Letter from Mrs M. Mackay, elder and tour guide at Old West Kirk, Greenock, 25 June 2014.

³⁰⁷ Bolton, *The Old West Kirk*, p.3.

³⁰⁸ E. H. H. Archibald, *The Fighting Ship in the Royal Navy AD 897-1984* (Poole, Dorset: Bandford Press, 1984), p.82.



Figure 14: *The model at the Old West Kirk, Greenock, hanging above the Sailor's Loft*

In the Firth of Forth, a similar story of church restoration and new building was also playing out across the nineteenth century. The old church of Bo'ness was built in 1638 almost entirely from subscriptions from the 'Skipperis and Mariners of Bo'ness.'³⁰⁹ The town had one of the oldest mutual beneficial societies for its sailors; the 'ancient Friendly Society', the Bo'ness United General Sea Box, which had been set up as a maritime welfare organisation in 1634, and whilst it operated under several names over the centuries, the 'Ancient Society of Seafaring Men, the Sea Poor's Box of the Burgh of Borrowstounness, the Sailor's Society, and the Sailor's Box Society' it has always been colloquially referred to locally as the Sea Box, and often just the Box.³¹⁰ When in 1649 the mariners decided to split from Kinneil church, in order to pay for their own minister the shipmasters and others invested money into land locally at the farm of Muirhouse, purchasing 169 acres two miles south of the town.³¹¹ The church and the society were greatly interwoven organisations; the church relied on the Box for its financial contributions and the Boxmasters, as they were called, met at the

³⁰⁹ Johnston, *Records of an Ancient Friendly Society* [Reprinted from the *Falkirk Herald*], p.15.

³¹⁰ *Ibid.*, pp.11-12.

³¹¹ *Ibid.*, p.18.

church and naturally had their own designated seating area in the church, and were paying £1 in 1646 'for keeping of the keys of the sailors loft,'³¹² which was demarcated and signified by the hanging of a model. That a ship model existed in the old church is only to be gathered from an invoice and payment receipt in the Sea Box Society archives to a Robert Sinclair in 1824 'to Riggen, Painting the Ship afresh.'³¹³ There are no other records for the ship model or references to it in either the kirk session minutes or the Bo'ness Sea Box Society records at Falkirk Archives, until 1889 when a new church was built. The kirk session minutes during the period of the new building works are mostly concerned with the seating allocations for the new enormous church. The new church, confusingly called Bo'ness Old Kirk, was built with seating for 1,000 people. A typical exchange in the kirk session minutes indicates the importance of seating for the society:

In pointing out the seats proposed to be allocated to the Sea Box vis the whole of the west gallery except for the two back seats Nos. 164 and 165 proposed to be retained by the session Mr William Miller mentioned that he considered it desirable that the Sea Box Society should possess the whole gallery and that it should be matter for further consideration and arrangement whether the Society should not purchase Nos. 164 and 165 and so be proprietors of the whole gallery.³¹⁴

This proposal was agreed with the session. The kirk session minutes also record permission granted in 1889 to install the ship model *Muirhouse* (see Case Study 18) above the new gallery:

³¹² *Ibid.*, p.40.

³¹³ Bo'ness Sea Box Society Rigging and painting ship in the church of Bo'ness paid to Rob Sinclair 13th August 1824, Invoice To Riggen, Painting the Ship afresh, 1824, Bo'ness Sea Box Society Records, A042.342, Falkirk Community Archives.

³¹⁴ Minute Book of Kirk-Session of Bo'ness, 1867-1892, Records of Church of Scotland synods, presbyteries and kirk sessions, CH2/540/8, Church of Scotland, Falkirk Community Trust Archives, pp.359-62.

with power also to the said society to erect and suspend (but that securely) and maintain in all time coming the model of the ship or vessel 'Muirhouse' from the roof of said West gallery but that always at the risk and expense of the said society, the responsibility of its being resting solely on the members of said Sea Box or society with entry occupation and possession to said pews from and after the term of Martinmas Eighteen Hundred and Eighty Nine to be the term or date of entry...³¹⁵

The model itself is a three-masted 32-gun frigate, not dissimilar to the *Arethusa* model at Ayr Auld Kirk, and with its kilted highlander figurehead it also has some similarities with the James Welsh model *Belvidera* of 1828.



Figure 15: Figurehead of the Muirhouse model at Old Kirk Bo'ness

Barely a mile away to the west of Bo'ness at Grangepans, now Carriden, another benevolent society was established by sailors in the mid-seventeenth century. This society, however, was not so well run, or perhaps was too small, and became defunct by 1856.³¹⁶ Here, too, an older church, originally built in 1766, was replaced by a larger and more comfortable building that opened in 1908. In it a model of a three-masted 28-gun sloop was hung (see Case Study 19), brought over from the old church to hang

³¹⁵ CH2/540/8 Minute Book of Kirk-Session of Bo'ness, pp.396-7.

³¹⁶ Johnston, *Records of an Ancient Friendly Society* [Reprinted from the *Falkirk Herald*], p.48.

above the central nave, in line with the aisle. Being a smaller church than the massive Bo'ness Old Kirk, and being hung above the congregation's heads as they walk into the church, the *Ranger* model is in many ways more striking than the *Muirhouse*. The *Ranger* is also the first model to have been lit by electric lighting connected to its rigging so that its navigation lights can be illuminated. There is no record of who built the model *Ranger*, or when, but a pattern has emerged from the models already discussed of Sailor's Boxes and Shipmaster Societies meeting in their local churches, being seated together and represented in those churches by ship models.

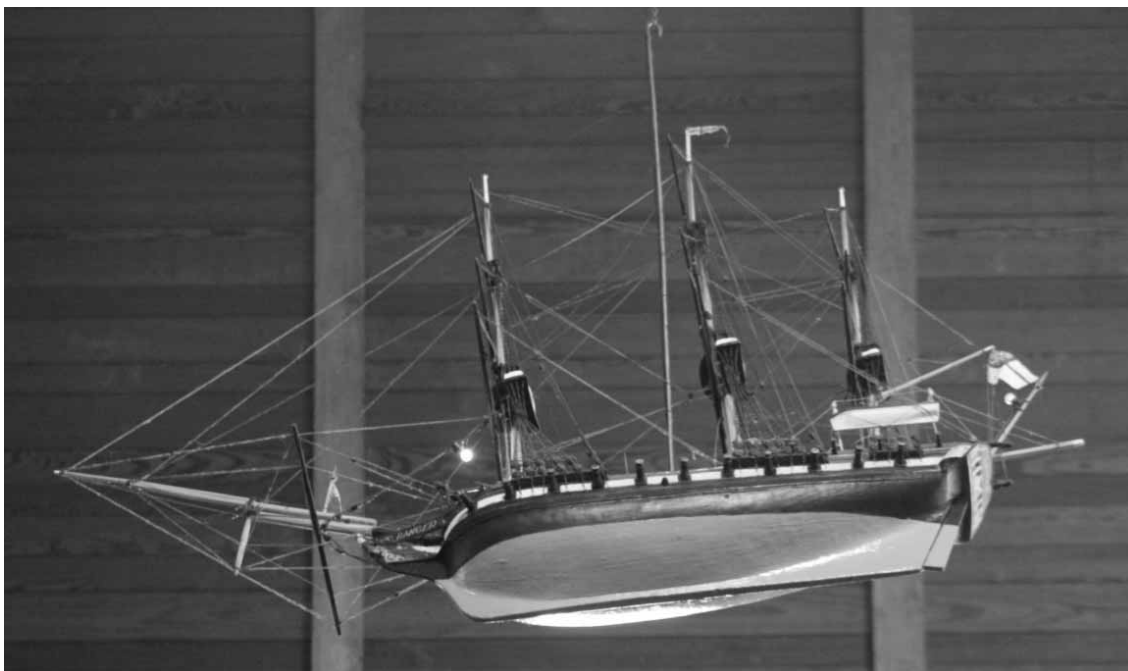


Figure 16: *Ranger* at Carriden is rigged for electric lighting

The study of the church ship models dating from the nineteenth century tells us as much about the fleet of lost models as it does about the new models that arrived in that century. A picture emerges of churches and seafaring communities in a state of flux from the loss of sailors from sea ports to serve in the Napoleonic Wars, many of those ports also benefitted financially from the changes in industries, shipbuilding in particular, which brought an influx of people to work and worship in their growing towns and cities. Throughout the century sailors continued to dominate the spaces they occupied in their churches through their designated seating areas, in particular the Sailor's Lofts, often signifying their professions by hanging a model in front of them. As the churches expanded, old buildings became inadequate for growing needs,

and in many cases were in a crumbling, decrepit condition, so that new church buildings were required. Many of the older ship models that had survived decades, if not centuries untouched, did not survive the move. It is uncertain how many models were removed, unrecorded by their kirk sessions and their Sailor's Societies, as most often their existence was not a matter of official record. This lack of official record is a consistent theme for ship models in Scottish churches, as will be seen in the next chapter which considers the majority of models in churches today; those from the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. Some other conclusions can also be reached, beyond the possibly unsurprising observation that all of the models so far discussed are found in churches in locations close to the sea or ports. We can also say that The Disruption of 1843 does not appear to have had an influence on where these models occur, except that they remained in the 'established' churches, and not the 'new' churches. This may be attributed to the nature of those churches and congregations that split from the established church at that time. As MacLaren describes in his study of the churches of Aberdeen, there was:

a clear distinction between the sections of the middle class who adhered to the Establishment and those who left to join the Free Church.³¹⁷ MacLaren found that 'support for the Establishment was drawn largely from long-standing middle-class families who had in the past governed the church in oligarchic fashion, controlling kirk sessions by successive co-option.'³¹⁸

The new churches, by contrast, tended to be either more working class in makeup, or from a newly formed order of middle classes, who were less embedded in the traditions and histories represented in the old churches.³¹⁹

Similarly, by the end of the nineteenth century, many Sailors' Societies had wound down or were not as strong as before. An example of this can be seen in Ayr kirk session minutes in 1887 and the sale of their Sailor's Loft back to the session:

Sailors Gallery proposed purchase - Dr Dykes reported that Mr J B Paton had intimated to him that the Sailors Society wish to dispose of their

³¹⁷ MacLaren, "Religion and Social Class," p.93.

³¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p.93.

³¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p.94.

Gallery in the Old Church, and that Mr Paton has desired on behalf of the Society to be informed whether the Kirk Session will purchase it.³²⁰

Overall church attendance and membership was in a trend of long-term decline throughout the nineteenth century, as Hillis states, 'of greater significance in the period 1800-2000 was the long-term decline in church attendance and membership,'³²¹ and many of the large churches built in the period to accommodate larger populations, or splinter groups from the Established church, were to be largely left unfilled, the United Free churches eventually reuniting with the Church of Scotland in 1929.³²² The changes to social welfare meant that the role of the Sailor's Box changed and was generally defunct by the end of the century. The social status that being a member of the church and a member of the Sailor's Society became largely irrelevant. However, as we shall see in the next chapter, this decline in church attendance and the decline in many traditional maritime trades, created a resurgence in the tradition of displaying ship models in Scottish churches.

³²⁰ Ayr Kirk Session, Ayr Auld Kirk Session Minutes, 1887, Virtual Volumes National Records of Scotland, Records of Ayr/Ayr Old and New St John the Baptist Kirk Session, CH2/751/18, Church of Scotland, Burns Monument Centre, Kilmarnock, p.567.

³²¹ P. Hillis, "Church and Society in Aberdeen and Glasgow, c.1800-2000," *The Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, 53 no.4 (2002), p.712.

³²² "Life and Work, Who we are," Church of Scotland, 2019.
<https://www.lifeandwork.org/about-us/who-we-are>.

Chapter 5: Twentieth and Twenty-first Century Ship Models

The sea is not a road.

Oh, but today we are alive.

Life itself is a risk.

We went to sea and did not die

Nigerian Migrant's Song, 2016³²³

This chapter describes and considers the majority of extant Scottish church ship models; those made or installed in churches in the twentieth century, and first decades of the twenty-first century. As discussed in the previous chapter, ship models often appeared with the building of new churches, frequently in association with mariner's organisations such as Shipmasters Societies or Sailor's Box Societies. This chapter will demonstrate that whilst the connection between sailors and their churches continued to be important, the significance of the sailor's societies had waned by the beginning of the twentieth century and disappeared completely by the start of the twenty-first. Far from this meaning the end of ship models being installed in Scottish churches, the resurgence of the tradition has seen almost as many new models appearing in the first sixteen years since 2000 as survive from the nineteenth century altogether (see appendix). The eleven models dating from the nineteenth century include the Carriden model *Ranger*, which although only installed into the new church in 1908, actually dates to several decades earlier and is therefore included in the previous chapter. Similarly, this chapter will include models installed in the twentieth century into churches built at the end of the nineteenth century, and in one case a twentieth-century church with an eighteenth-century model. In other words, any previous patterns established by the study of nineteenth- or even seventeenth-century ship models in churches, are corrupted by the examination of the more modern models. The twentieth century saw church communities struggling to assert their identities and relevance to modern life as congregations continued to dwindle.³²⁴ Some churches began to use their historical significance to encourage visitors, whether worshippers or tour-

³²³ G. Rosi, "Fire at Sea," (Italy, 2016). This quotation, from a documentary film about Lampedusa and migrant boats, reminds us that perils on the sea are still very real in the 21st century.

³²⁴ Hillis, "Church and Society in Aberdeen and Glasgow, c.1800-2000," p.712.

ists, to learn about their history and justify their existence in the face of church closures. Models were used to demonstrate links to important and often little-known moments and characters in national history, and to commemorate maritime losses, whether war losses or the loss of local industries. In doing so, this chapter asserts that each church is engaging with the symbolism adopted by its community. By permitting these ship, and increasingly boat, models to be displayed in their churches, the church placed itself within the surrounding post-maritime community, the community acting, as Cohen describes, 'as a symbolic, rather than a structural, construct.'³²⁵ This chapter finds that with the decline of maritime industries such as shipbuilding and fishing throughout the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, these seafaring communities used the symbolism of their former trades, and increasingly incorporated the specific representation of their families' own boats or with personal associations to assert their sense of self and sense of place in the church. In particular, in the small coastal village of Cockenzie and Port Seton, the family-run fishing fleets, and the industries associated with them, died out and were replaced by incomers, commuters from Edinburgh settling in the village. This change in identity for the people of the town, from all the families being involved in fishing or boatbuilding industries, to an influx of new people not connected with those trades, corresponded with an increase in the maritime heritage and ship models being displayed in the Old Church.

This chapter will describe the ship, and for the first time increasingly boat, models that continued to be installed into new churches in the first half of the twentieth century. It will be demonstrated that they were very different from the models that had previously been selected for display in churches, for example that these new models included the first representations of vernacular working boats such as the sailing fishing drifters known as 'Fifies' and 'Zulus'. This study also demonstrates that newer churches were installing models of much older style sailing vessels, harking to maritime eras decades and even centuries older than their churches. These newer churches were then followed by much older churches recalling their maritime heritage from an even earlier period. Finally, it will be seen that the majority of more recent

³²⁵ Cohen, *Symbolic Construction*, p.98.

ship and boat models are essentially commemorative in nature; memorials for past industries and working life and in one instance as a war memorial.

The literature on Scottish church ship models from this period is limited to Harley's short survey, and an article from a motoring magazine in the 1950s. Harley identified only twelve Scottish models in total, missing some such as the Norwegian barque in the Kirk of St Nicholas Uniting (see Case Study 2) and the model in Chalmers Memorial Church (see Case Study 23), and inaccurately glossing over the steam trawler *Pursuit* in St Monans (see Case Study 12). Harley's book was published before ten of the models found in this research were installed. Similarly, a lengthy article published in *Scotland's SMT Magazine* in 1951 gives a useful overview of many Scottish church ship models, including many in the previous chapter, but was published before 21 of the models found in this study were installed.³²⁶

5.1 *The First Fishing Boats in Scottish Churches*

The first model known to have been installed in a Scottish church in the twentieth century was not a warship or a ship for international trade, but a humble Fifie, a sailing fishing boat, made for a new church built at Cockenzie and Port Seton in East Lothian in 1905 (see Case Study 23). Cockenzie and Port Seton are two villages with harbours that, over time, have merged into one and are routinely referred to as Cockenzie and Port Seton. The new church was eventually named after the Reverend Thomas Chalmers, one of the leaders of the Disruption of 1843,³²⁷ whose name had been honoured and commemorated by the construction of several new churches around Scotland. The interior of the Chalmers Memorial Parish Church at Cockenzie and Port Seton is strikingly decorated with painted maritime motifs. Every beam and ceiling panel has been painted white and is decorated with a pale blue stencilled marine form; birds, waves, fish and scallop shells. Sitting atop one of these painted beams across the main dais above the communion table is a scale model of a Fifie, a late nineteenth-century sailing fishing boat that first originated across the Firth of Forth in Fife. The model is

³²⁶ Leslie, "Ship in the Kirk."

³²⁷ E. A. Livingstone, *The Concise Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church*, 3rd ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013); Special Collections: Thomas Chalmers Collection, University of Glasgow, 2019. <https://www.gla.ac.uk/myglasgow/specialcollections/collectionsa-z/thomaschalmerscollection/>.

painted in the traditional black and white with red hull under the waterline and has been given a fictional Leith fishing registration number, LH 1905, to denote the year it was made and the opening of the new church. It has the name *Margaret Chalmers*, after the daughter of Thomas Chalmers, herself a major benefactor to the new church.³²⁸ The model was made by a local fisherman, William Hunnam, the son of a fisherman lost at sea with his two brothers, in a boat named *The Brothers*, off Yarmouth in 1890.³²⁹ William Hunnam's model was initially made as a form of donation bowl for members of the congregation to put their money during the fundraising for the construction of the new church. Once the church was built the model was raised to its new position on the beam above the dais.



Figure 17: *Margaret Chalmers* sits on a roof beam at Chalmers Memorial Church, Port Seton

Fifies were developed from the mid-nineteenth century, and are traditionally attributed to the fishermen of the small Fife port of Cellardyke.³³⁰ Being constructed in

³²⁸ J.Sharp, "The Village Kirk," *East Lothian Life*, 2014, p.34.

³²⁹ Historic Environment Scotland, "Scran: Learning Culture Heritage, Scotland's East Coast Fisheries project," (Edinburgh: Historic Environment Scotland). <https://www.scran.ac.uk>. SCRAN ID 000-000-574-289-C

³³⁰ H. D. Watson, *Kilrenny and Cellardyke 800 Years of History* (Edinburgh: John Donald, 1986), p.176.

a sturdy clinker-built method, and with a covered deck, these small boats could hold much larger cargoes of fish than previous boat designs, and only required an average of seven men and boys to handle and put out as many as 70 nets.³³¹ The development of a mechanical winch, and then the steam capstan, meant that they could not only handle much larger sails, but also haul a much greater catch aboard. The Fifies are famous for their distinctive straight stem and stern lines that meant they were very fast and manoeuvrable and their simple rig allowed space for a large catch. They soon became the most popular design of small fishing boat on the east coast.³³² Zulus are reported to have first been designed in Lossiemouth on the Moray Firth in 1879,³³³ about the time of the invasion of Zululand by the British, hence the exotic name. Zulu boats are related to Fifies in that they share the same upright stem for manoeuvrability, but they combine this with a raked stern to maximise capacity. By the 1880s, Fifies and Zulus were the boats of choice for the herring fishing industry, which saw hundreds and eventually, by 1900, thousands of boats following the migrating herring shoals from Shetland to as far south as Yarmouth on the Norfolk coast, and occasionally down to the French coast.³³⁴ With them travelled thousands of men, women and children, all involved with catching, processing and barrelling the fish, which were then transported on the new railway networks to markets in distant towns and cities. Herring fishing had become mechanised.³³⁵

The Chalmers Memorial Church model is the first recorded model of a small working craft to be installed in a Scottish church; however, another older church in Angus has a boatbuilder's half hull model of a Zulu sailing fishing boat on its wall. The half-hull model, of a boat called *Brothers* (see Case Study 7), fishing registry number KY173, is in what was originally Auchmithie Parish Church, in a small fishing village

³³¹ M. Tanner, *Scottish Fishing Boats* (Buckinghamshire: Shire Publications Ltd, 1996), p.15.

³³² "Developments in Boat Design," The Scottish Fisheries Museum Trust, 2015.

<http://www.scotfishmuseum.org/developments-in-boat-design.php>

³³³ Tanner, *Scottish Fishing Boats*.

³³⁴ *Ibid.*

³³⁵ "Developments in Boat Design"; "The Herring Boom". <http://www.scotfishmuseum.org/the-herring-boom.php>

near Arbroath.³³⁶ The church at Auchmithie was built in 1885 when it disjoined from the church in Arbroath.³³⁷ It is not clear when the model was installed in the church, or if indeed it is intended to represent a particular association to the church or place. There were two boats, one of that name and one of that fishing number, registered to Cellardyke in neighbouring Fife, very close in sailing distance to Auchmithie. They are listed in the 1895 *Mariner's Almanac*, one named *Brothers* and another with the fishing registry number KY173, named *Wave*.³³⁸ This suggests that the name or the number were later additions, possibly made by the donor. It may well be that, as the boat-builder would have used the same model for any number of identical boats, the model is not intended to represent only one boat, but an entire fleet. These boats would be known intimately by people all along the east coast and would have powerful family associations for anyone seeing this model in the church. Whole families sailed and fished together on Fifies and Zulus, travelling for long periods of the year and often living on board their boats when not in their home ports. This communal way of fishing inevitably led to extended families up and down the east coast, and when disasters struck it could mean the loss of several generations at one go, the loss of the breadwinners and livelihoods from multiple families, and entire communities were affected. As was demonstrated, for example, at Portlethen in the previous chapter, the church was a major presence in the lives of these seafaring communities; a source of financial help when boats were lost, as well as spiritual comfort. These were close-knit communities, albeit mobile and spread across hundreds of miles, and they shared a deep and powerful spiritual belief; superstitions were pervasive. Multiple accounts of the fisherfolk's traditions and beliefs exist, and were the subject of study by the Catholic priest, writer and artist Peter Anson.³³⁹ The nature of the close family groupings on boats and

³³⁶ This is not necessarily the same boat as owned by the Hunnam brothers which sank in 1890, as the name was popular among fishing families and multiple variations of the name were used. See <https://fishingboatheritage.co.uk> (Accessed: 17/03/2019).

³³⁷ Canmore Archaeology Notes, National Record of the Historic Environment, Historic Environment Scotland, 2019, <https://canmore.org.uk> (Accessed 17/02/19).

³³⁸ *The Mariner's Almanac and Tide Tables*, 1895, p.230.

³³⁹ P. F. Anson, *Fishing Boats and Fisher Folk on the East Coast of Scotland* (London: J. M. Dent and Sons, 1971); P. F. Anson, *Scots Fisherfolk* (Banff: Published for the Saltire Society by the *Banffshire Journal*, 1950); P. F. Anson, *Fisher Folk-lore: old customs, taboos and superstitions among fisher folk, especially in Brittany and Normandy, and on the east coast of Scotland*

the perilous nature of the work meant they were susceptible to mass religious experiences, such as revivals.³⁴⁰ One religious revival of 1921, following a bad season blighted by storms and a lack of fish, saw thousands of fisherfolk embracing evangelical Christianity.³⁴¹ Reports were written of boats going to sea with their entire crew singing psalms, and a newspaper account describes:

testimony meetings these weather-hardened fishermen speak of "The Great Captain", call Christ "The Skipper", or of "Having the Pilot on board" because they are bound for the "Port of Heaven". The chart is the Bible, so with such a chart and such a captain, "we canna gang wrang" they say.³⁴²

There is no doubt that the ease with which Christianity can incorporate maritime imagery was central to the spread of religious revivalism. As Meek states:

the Christian message at the heart of the revival was accepted, and readily absorbed, because it was moulded to fit the conventions of the fishing communities... through testimonies, sermons, hymns which drew on seagoing metaphors, the Christian faith was contextualised in a manner which was directly relevant to the day-to-day experiences of the community.³⁴³

As with other ports already discussed, the inevitability of disaster and the inherent dangers of the industry were a universal consideration. The fishermen of Cockenzie and Port Seton formed a Friendly Society in 1815, initially to control the local oyster dredging trade, but soon the society extended their remit to help those fishermen 'laid aside by sickness and disease' or 'old age or other infirmity'.³⁴⁴ The Friendly Society also paid the funeral expenses of members, their wives or children. The society was registered under the Friendly Society Act of 1868, initially based at the School House, but in later years as the Society diminished the last remnants of it were put on display at Cockenzie Old Church, close to the harbour including banners and painted life-rings.

(London: Faith Press, 1965); P. F. Anson, *Fishermen and Fishing Ways* (Totowa, NJ: EP Publishing, 1975).

³⁴⁰ D. E. Meek, "Fishers of Men: The 1921 Religious Revival, its cause, context and transmission," in Porter, *After Columba, after Calvin*, p.136.

³⁴¹ *Ibid.*, p.137.

³⁴² *Ibid.*, p.139.

³⁴³ *Ibid.*, pp.139-40.

³⁴⁴ Rules of the Friendly Society of Fishermen in Cockenzie and Port Seton, Scotland. "Scran: Learning Culture Heritage; Scotland's East Coast Fisheries project."

The Society was finally wound up in 1975.³⁴⁵ It was in Cockenzie Old Church that William Hunnam's nephew, Tommy Hunnam installed another Fifie many years later.



Figure 18: *Half-hull model Brothers at Auchmithie*

It is interesting to note that no ship or boat models appear to have been installed in Scottish churches during or following the First and Second World Wars, or at least none that survive. This may reflect not only the sheer scale of the losses of men to these communities, but also that formal memorials were soon erected in every church in cities, towns and villages across the United Kingdom, particularly following the First World War, and therefore it could be argued that perhaps the need for, or appropriateness of, more personal memorials was not felt by maritime communities. As we shall see later in this chapter, with the passage of time after the two world wars, subsequent memorials did include much more personal mementoes of war losses, but at the time of the wars, and shortly after, it seems that no ship models were presented to churches.

5.2 'Genteel and Fashionable' - Ship Models in New Episcopalian Churches

Following the installation of the Fifie in the rafters of the new church at Cockenzie and Port Seton in 1905, no further model appeared until 1954. The Episcopal church of All

³⁴⁵ Cockenzie and Port Seton Fishermen's Association Box, Scotland. "Scran: Learning Culture Heritage; Scotland's East Coast Fisheries project."

Saints' in St Andrews was built in 1907, and is tucked away behind a high wall, halfway between the ruins of the castle and the cathedral.³⁴⁶ Although a new building, it was designed to be in keeping with the historic town centre in a seventeenth-century style incorporating elements of vernacular Scottish architecture such as stepped gables and a courtyard all built of local yellow sandstone. The church itself has a low arched nave, with Italian marble steps to the chancery, and the overall effect is of a small, intimate church much older than it actually is. The ship model that was donated to the church is of an unnamed 38-gun Dutch warship of the early seventeenth century, and it hangs in an archway at the rear of the nave (see Case Study 8). It was the gift of Dr Dorothea Walpole, an Edinburgh medical doctor, in honour of her brother, the novelist and screenwriter Sir Hugh Walpole.³⁴⁷ He had kept the model in the study at his house in the Lake District, and it can be seen in a watercolour of the writer at work in the collections of Keswick Museum.³⁴⁸ Hugh and his sister had no obvious connection with St Andrews, but there was a strong family connection to the Episcopalian Church through their father; they were the children of a Bishop of Edinburgh at St. Mary's Episcopal Cathedral.³⁴⁹ Following her brother's death in 1941 Dorothea also endowed a gallery dedicated to Hugh at Keswick Museum³⁵⁰ and donated several major works of art to the National Gallery of Scotland.³⁵¹

³⁴⁶ "Canmore Website National Record of the Historic Environment."

³⁴⁷ Harley, *Church Ships*, p.23; "All Saints' St Andrews History The Building," accessed 11/06/2014, <https://www.allsaints-standrews.org.uk/about/the-building/>

³⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, p.23.

³⁴⁹ Unknown, "Obituary Dr Dorothea Walpole," *British Medical Journal*, 2, no.5161 (1959).

³⁵⁰ Keswick Museum, *The History of the Museum, Gallery & Collections*, <https://keswickmuseum.org.uk/about/our-history/> (accessed 12/02/2018).

³⁵¹ See works by Augustus John and Walter Sickert bequeathed by Dr Dorothea Walpole and Mr R. H. Walpole, 1963.



Figure 19: Model presented in memory of Hugh Walpole at All Saints' Church, St Andrews

Just three years later, in 1957, another ship model was donated, this time at St. Mary's Episcopal Cathedral Church in Edinburgh.³⁵² That model made by Sir Christopher Furness of the Furness Shipbuilding Company and Furness Withy Line, is of the famous tea clipper ship *Ariel*, was installed in a glass case against a pillar in the nave of the cathedral (see Case Study 21). The clipper ship has no direct connection to the city of Edinburgh, except in so far as the wealth from the tea trade would have been another important revenue for the city, which is both the historic and the financial capital of Scotland. St Mary's is the mother church of the diocese of Edinburgh and maintains a tradition of daily choral worship. St Mary's Episcopal Cathedral and All Saints' Church in St Andrews have several connections and similarities; they are both Episcopalian in denomination, both have a connection to the Walpole family, and like the church at St Andrews, the cathedral church in Edinburgh is not an ancient building, but rather was completed in 1879 and was not yet 80 years old when the model was installed.³⁵³ The

³⁵² The same church at which Dorothea and Hugh Walpole's father had served as Bishop of Edinburgh.

³⁵³ "St Mary's Cathedral History," St Mary's Episcopal Cathedral, <https://www.cathedral.net/about/history/> (Accessed 11/03/2016).

cathedral church is a large imposing sandstone building with three spires, close to Princes Street in the heart of the upmarket west end of the city. It was designed by the famous Victorian architect Sir George Gilbert Scott, who was inspired by ‘the early Gothic churches and abbeys of Scotland’; its age is not immediately apparent and it gives the impression of being much older than it is.³⁵⁴



Figure 20: *St Mary's Cathedral Church was completed in 1879*

³⁵⁴ *Ibid.*



Figure 21: *Clipper-ship Ariel was displayed in a glass case against a pillar in the nave*

The Episcopalian church has a chequered history in Scotland, marked by a continuous struggle and jostling for position against Presbyterianism throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.³⁵⁵ St Giles' Cathedral in Edinburgh, at first an episcopacy, lost and regained its status as cathedral several times, until finally confirmed as the Presbyterian High Kirk in Scotland by the arrival of William of Orange in 1688. The Episcopalian Church subsequently suffered from its association with the Jacobite Risings of 1745 and was subject to the restrictions of the penal laws that followed.³⁵⁶ However, with the death of Charles Edward Stewart in 1788, the Scots Episcopalians sought to distance themselves from the Stewarts and Jacobitism and a reconciliation led to the Repeal of the Penal Laws in 1792.³⁵⁷ By the first decades of the nineteenth

³⁵⁵ A MacLean, "Episcopal Worship in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries," in D. Forrester and D. Murray (eds.), *Studies in the History of Worship in Scotland* (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1984), pp.119-21.

³⁵⁶ E. Nimmo, "Scottish Episcopacy in the North East in the Late Nineteenth Century," in Porter, *After Columba, After Calvin*, p.71.

³⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, p.80.

century the Episcopalian Church was financially poor, but numbers had increased considerably:³⁵⁸

Its new adherents were largely people who had come into contact with the Anglican Church, and admired its ordered services, and sometimes its doctrinal standards. Such contact was frequently through the armed services, schooling in England, or intermarriage with Anglicans. There is evidence that socially the English connection appealed to some, especially in Edinburgh, where the Episcopal Church has been described as "genteel and fashionable."³⁵⁹

The Episcopalians retained their bishops and many of the High Church trappings and liturgy, and it encouraged connections to the wealthy, upper middle classes in Scotland, which in turn helped to finance the building of new churches throughout the nineteenth century. It is therefore not surprising that these ship models illustrate the wealthy connections of their churches. The models at St Andrews and Edinburgh both represent forms of power and status as well as a sense of romance. Both churches were newly built in areas of wealth and power in Scotland; St Andrews the historic university town and Edinburgh, the country's financial capital, and both used architecture to create an exaggerated sense of antiquity. Both ship types chosen could be said to embody past glories; an archaic sailing warship, and a tea clipper, symbol of Scotland's former position as the powerhouse of international trade and empire, and both are presented in the churches of a wealthy elite. There may have been only the merest personal connections between the model's donors and maritime experiences represented by their models, but clearly, both donors felt that those churches were the appropriate settings for a ship model. Given that the Walpoles enjoyed an aesthetic lifestyle of some privilege, one full of Christian devotion, the donation of an antique ship model would certainly have been consistent and in keeping with the antique elegance of the church. If we consider this as a romantic gesture from a family of writers for the genteel seaside town of St Andrews, then the incongruity of the age and style of the model, and its lack of connection to the place or the people, becomes irrelevant. The Episcopalian practices, already much more in the High Church Anglican tradition with their sung liturgies, surplices and incense burning, could easily embrace a ship model

³⁵⁸ MacLean, "Episcopal Worship in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries," p.107.

³⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, p.108.

such as these in the style of the votive tradition without the necessity of them being in a form appropriate to the place.³⁶⁰ The model's lack of authenticity was not a barrier or consideration for its inclusion in the churches, but rather it is their connections to families of wealth and influence that create their significance. The model's presence references the heritage of a long-standing religious practice (that of votive acts), and a particular ancient aesthetic, and so their appropriateness lies in their form as historic ships, regardless of type, which conjures to the viewer a heritage for the church itself. In a comparatively newly built church this visual historical link provides a helpful impression of age and tradition.

5.3 *Old Churches; New Models*

Whilst the newly built Episcopalian churches might be said to be masquerading as older, perhaps more established churches, two churches in Fife, both with centuries-long associations with some of the most important events in British history - the birthplace of a Scottish naval hero and the place where King James VI called for the Bible to be translated into English - also selected a ship model as a means of conveying their historical significance.

Between St Andrews and Edinburgh, as one travels along the Fife coast, lie two ancient churches at Upper Largo and Burntisland. Upper Largo, a tiny village close to the coast, has been a Christian settlement since at least the ninth century.³⁶¹ The present parish church dates from the seventeenth century, and for a small parish the village boasts a large presence in the history of Scotland. The church at Upper Largo sits on a raised piece of land overlooking the Firth of Forth, just a few miles west from the church at St Monans discussed in the previous chapter. Upper Largo was home to the fifteenth-century shipmaster and merchant-trader, Sir Andrew Wood.³⁶² Already a successful seaman and trader, Wood rose to pre-eminence when he led an attack on, and captured an English fleet of five ships with just two of his own armed merchant ships, *Flower* and *Yellow Caravel*, off the coast at Dunbar in 1489. In histories of Scotland he

³⁶⁰ MacLean, "Episcopal Worship in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries," p.122.

³⁶¹ "Canmore Website National Record of the Historic Environment"; A. Lawrie, *Largo and Newburn Parish Church; History of Largo Kirk*, 3rd ed. (Largo, Fife: Largo and Newburn Parish Church, 2012), p.2.

³⁶² *Ibid.*, pp.12-13.

has been referred to as 'Scotland's Nelson.'³⁶³ In 1511, Wood was also involved in the construction of the largest ship ever built in Scotland, England or France,³⁶⁴ the *Great Michael*. King James IV's ship cost an estimated £30,000 and 'was of so great stature, and took so much timber, that except Falkland, she wasted all the woods in Fife,'³⁶⁵ using all the oak in the kingdom and bringing in timbers from Norway. The king is reported to have visited the ship on a daily basis so as to enjoy dinners with his lords, and the *Great Michael* is described as:

twelve score foot of length, and thirty-six foot within the sides. She was ten-foot-thick in the wall ... and boards on every side, so stark and so thick, that no cannon could go through her...three hundred mariners to sail her; she had six score of gunners to use her artillery; and had a thousand men of war, by her captains, skippers and quarter-masters.³⁶⁶

Sir Andrew Wood was her quarter-master, and King James IV is said to have visited Burntisland with 'his admiral' Sir Andrew Wood to view his magnificent new ship in the Firth of Forth.³⁶⁷ Although Wood is largely unknown outside of Scottish and medieval maritime history, he can be said to have had a significant role in Scotland's maritime history. The tiny hamlet of Largo is rightly proud of their famous seafaring son; however, until the 1960s it had no memorial to him.

Less than twenty miles further west along the coast of the Firth of Forth is the larger town of Burntisland, with a Parish Church that has an equally significant place in the history of Scotland. Constructed in 1592, it is one of the first churches to be built after the Reformation, and in 1601 was host to the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland at which King James VI called for an English translation of the Bible.³⁶⁸ The building is of a unique design, based on Biblical symbolism, being four walls around a tower, and built on a rock over the Firth of Forth recalling the imagery of solid founda-

³⁶³ J. Grant, "A Memoir of Sir Andrew Wood of Largo, Captain of the "Yellow Caravel," and Admiral to King James III," *Tait's Edinburgh Magazine*, 19 no.220 (1852).

³⁶⁴ R. Lindsay, of Pitscottie, *The History of Scotland; from 1436 to 1565. In which are contained Accounts of many remarkable Passages altogether differing from our other Historians; and many Facts are related, either concealed by some, or omitted by others*, 2nd ed. (Glasgow: R. Urie, 1604), pp.195-7.

³⁶⁵ *Ibid.*

³⁶⁶ *Ibid.*

³⁶⁷ H. F. Kerr, "St Columba's Church, Burntisland 1592," *Transactions of the Scottish Ecclesiological Society* 1941-45.

³⁶⁸ Kerr, "St Columba's Church, Burntisland 1592," p.11.

tion of the rock of the church. Internally, it is a square design with lofts on all four sides of an open plan central space filled with box pews throughout. The pulpit stands against the south-west pillar and is surrounded by seats on all sides; the word of God being truly central to the church in every sense and is raised so high that the minister would be level with the surrounding lofts. The square design of the church is said to have been inspired by a church in Amsterdam,³⁶⁹ and whilst there is no evidence of this, the internal decoration did share some striking similarities with the Reformed churches of the Low Countries, in particular the inclusion of the written word on wooden tablets of the kind seen in churches at Haarlem and elsewhere, and also 'testifies to a reformulated service and new roles for the church, government, guild and resident.'³⁷⁰ At Burntisland church, 'on the sides of the pillars were suitable texts for various occupations, with the Lord's Prayer, the Ten Commandments, and the Apostle's creed...It is probable that these texts were painted on tablets and hung on pillars.'³⁷¹ The front panels of all the lofts were decorated with illustrations and emblems of the various trade guilds assigned to the seating, a sheaf of corn supporting a St Andrews cross for the bakers, for example, but the majority of surviving symbols relate to the mariners. In common with other sea port churches of this period discussed in previous chapters, the dominant guild in Burntisland was the Prime Gilt Society of the skippers and mariners.³⁷² The Prime Gilt Society of Burntisland was established in 1600 and, as with the Sailor's Boxes at Bo'ness and Greenock and the Shipmasters Society at Aberdeen, had the right to collect a levy from all sailors using the port. As with other maritime benevolent societies, the Prime Gilt, also known as the Box, used this money for the care of their poor, destitute sailors and the sailor's widows and orphans. In addition, the Prime Gilt had the right to a loft in the church and to the use of their own mortcloths for funerals of their members.³⁷³ The Prime Gilt Society was so numerous that they had loft seating on the entire south side of the church as well as half of the east loft; many more seats than the guildry (merchants), baxters (bakers), tailors,

³⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, p.10.

³⁷⁰ Mochizuki, *The Netherlandish Image*, p.7.

³⁷¹ Young, *History of Burntisland*, p.160.

³⁷² Burntisland, Prime Gilt Society of Burntisland Minute Book, 1781, GD1/654/13, GD1/654/12 & /13: National Records of Scotland.

³⁷³ Burntisland, Prime Gilt Society of Burntisland Minute Book.

hammermen, school master and maltsters (brewers).³⁷⁴ The Prime Gilt also had their own substantial stone external staircase, as also seen at Kinghorn, so that they could come and go from the service without causing disruption. The minutes of the Kirk Session also demonstrate that as with other churches, these seating areas were a greatly contentious and contested subject for the members of the church. A great deal of negotiating as to payment and designation of the lofts can be gathered from the now lost record books of 1621, a section of which was deemed to be so significant to the running of the kirk session that the frontispiece of the 1738-minute book includes a transcription of the following text from the old book:

The session having chosen James Thomson Wright built the corner loft between betwixt the Merchants and Maltmen in the kirk extending to the sum of sixty pounds: and the Session thinking that the Merchants and Maltmen should have paid for the same they flatly refused to pay any part thereof. Wherefore the skippers and mariners are content to pay the one half out of their box the Session the other half, being thirty pounds of the box of the Session. Wherefore this is ordained to be enacted in this register, as the said loft only appertaining to the Mariners and Session. The above, as recorded in the Register of the Kirk Session of Burntisland in the year 1621 at the 7th October, is by order of the Kirk Session August 18th 1738, extracted...³⁷⁵

The regulations regarding the use of the seats, the hierarchy of seating arrangements was laid out in the minutes of the Prime Gilt Society:

That no person whatsoever be allowed to sit in the Masters Fore Seat, without first paying their entry thereto, and annually... That no person sit in the Masters back seat (mates and carpenters and sailors excepted) without agreeing with the master of the house for the time...Sailors fore seat for mates and carpenters, and sailors of good repute in the place they paying annually for the said seats. The second and third seats for sailors and strangers.³⁷⁶

The rest of the Society minutes include arguments with the Guildry about destroyed seats and payments for repairs, it is clear from the records that the seating arrange-

³⁷⁴ Kerr, "St Columba's Church, Burntisland 1592," p.11.

³⁷⁵ Frontispiece to the Minutes of Session of Burntisland 1738-1852, The Minutes of session of Burntisland, 1738-1852, Records of Church of Scotland synods, presbyteries and kirk sessions, CH2/523/7/1, Church of Scotland, National Records of Scotland.

³⁷⁶ Burntisland, Prime Gilt Society of Burntisland Minute Book, 1781, GD1/654/13, National Records of Scotland.

ments were, as in other churches at this period, hotly contested and areas for civil dispute. The Society even paid to have their loft policed, 'to attend the Masters Loft in the time of the sacrament to keep proper order in the time of divine worshipping.'³⁷⁷

As the mariners paid for a large number of the loft seats, and were the most numerous inhabitants of the church lofts, it is perhaps not unusual that so many of the painted panels decorating the front of the lofts relate to their industry. The twelve maritime panels, all dating from the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, include a brig flying a Union Jack and two St Andrews crosses, a panel with the dates 1602 (the completion of the lofts) and 1733, two panels show hermaphrodite-brigs with early forms of the Union flag set, one with the words 'Dabit Deus His Quoque Vela' (God will give the sails) above, and a sloop painted before 1707. Figures of sailors and ship masters are also shown; one of a sailor fathoming a rope, and three of master mariners using the cross staff and astrolabe. One panel shows a sea battle between a Scottish and Danish ship, and either side of the loft corner are two panels with mottos; 'Though God's power be sufficient to govern us yet he appointed his angels to watch over us' and 'God's Providence is our Inheritance'. In amongst this display of mercantile maritime status was also a ship model. It is referred to in histories of the town and church, such as this 1913 history of Burntisland: 'It has often been said that a model ship was suspended from the hook above the east gallery. Mrs Balingall told me her father, for 50 years Session-Clerk, often spoke of it. It was not the model now in the old Council Chamber.'³⁷⁸ This model disappeared, like that at St Monans and Greenock Old West Kirk, during a refurbishment of the church in 1822,³⁷⁹ at the same time as many of the loft fronts were painted over and the decorated panels were lost for over a century. According to the church's published history, the model was related to the *Great Michael*, giving a version of that ship's demise, which suggests that after it had been sold to the French king in 1513, the *Great Michael* had sailed back to fight the English in 1545, sinking King Henry VIII's flagship *Mary Rose* and then returning to the Firth of Forth; 'This ship encountered a severe storm in the River Forth and grounded. The crew received hospitality at the nearby church at Kirkton. In gratitude, a model of

³⁷⁷ Burntisland, Prime Gilt Society of Burntisland Minute Book, August 1781.

³⁷⁸ Young, *History of Burntisland*, p.146

³⁷⁹ *Ibid.*

the ship was gifted to the Kirkton Church.³⁸⁰ This version of events seems unlikely. The *Great Michael* is accepted to have been converted into a floating hulk at Brest, where it eventually fell into decay.³⁸¹ Given how famous and proud the Scots were of their spectacular warship it seems likely that if it had returned to Scottish waters, and moreover if it had sunk in the Firth of Forth, then this would have been recorded in multiple sources at the time and in histories of the area since. Furthermore, the similarity to stories from other churches with ship models; the tales of shipwreck and gratitude told from Portlethen to Ayr, have not been verified in any records or archives. Once again, we are forced to conclude that whatever the original model was, it is very unlikely to have been made by the crew of the foundered *Great Michael*. However, in 1962 a church elder and treasurer made and donated a model of the *Great Michael* to the church in honour of his father (see Case Study 16).³⁸² It is based on the model made in 1926 for the Royal Scottish Museum, Edinburgh, now the National Museums of Scotland.³⁸³ One difference apparent to viewers of the Burntisland replica is that the hull shape is very different, much wider and straighter at the stem and overall much heavier and bulkier with a blunt, rounded stern. It is displayed hung from a chain and hook into the ceiling against a pillar at the same height as the painted panels of the Prime Gilt's loft.

³⁸⁰ W. H. Sweeney, *A Guide to the Heritage and History of Burntisland Parish Church*, revised and updated from an original version by N. B. Mackie (2014), p.43.

³⁸¹ G. Buchanan, *Buchanan's History of Scotland: In twenty books. The fourth edition translated from the Latin original, wherein several errors in the English editions are corrected, to which is added, an appendix, containing a genealogy of all the kings from Fergus I to James VI, in two volumes* (Edinburgh: Printed by Hamilton, Balfour and Neill for J. Wood [etc]. 1751).

³⁸² A plaque to this effect is attached to the model's hull, this is also repeated in Sweeney, *A Guide to the Heritage and History of Burntisland Parish Church*, revised and updated from an original version by N. B. Mackie, p.43

³⁸³ National Museums of Scotland ref. T.1926.20 made by Mr R Paterson of Lasswade, who undertook a number of commissions for the Royal Scottish Museum, all of historical vessels and it is likely he based his design in part on the description of the *Great Michael* in the writing of Robert Lindsay of Pitcottie, as well as paintings from the period.

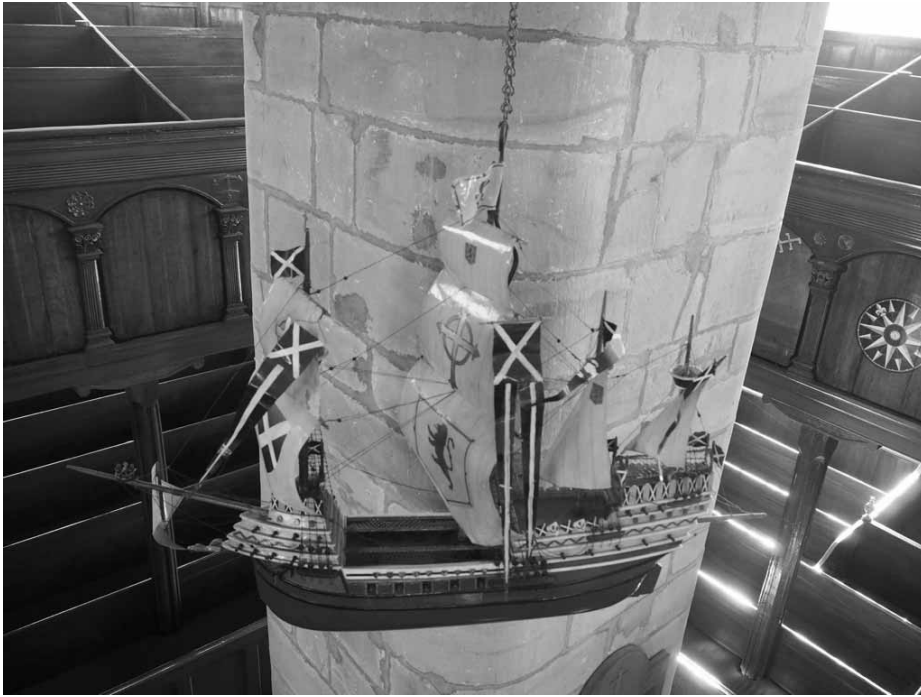


Figure 22: *Great Michael at Burntisland Parish Church*



Figure 23: *Yellow Caravel at Upper Largo Parish Church*

In August 1969, at a service televised by the BBC at Upper Largo Parish Church, another historical model was presented, and the church finally had a memorial to

Scottish naval hero Sir Andrew Wood (see Case Study 13).³⁸⁴ Made by church member Dan Marshall it represents Sir Andrew Wood's ship the *Yellow Caravel*. This too is a copy of one made by Paterson for the Royal Scottish Museum in 1926.³⁸⁵ This model is smaller than the *Great Michael* at Burntisland, both being 1:48 scale, and is displayed on a small table against a wall next to the main dais so that all members of the congregation looking at the communion table and pulpit will see the little ship as well. What can be seen by these 1960s replicas is that both models represent historical links for their church and their town or village. Whereas the 1950s models in the Episcopalian churches are making vague connections to a non-specific past maritime tradition, the broadest sense of a tradition of a ship in a church, both the Upper Largo and Burntisland models are making very specific statements about their church's histories. In common with other forms of Folk Art, these ship models represent 'potent fantasies about 'authenticity' and 'purity', mixed into a heady cocktail with the addition of a dash of nostalgia.'³⁸⁶ These churches are authentically old, even if their models are not, and it is the models which make a connection to a much older period in the local history than the present church buildings themselves can claim.

5.4 *Late Twentieth Century Models*

The last quarter of the twentieth century and the first two decades of the twenty-first saw a surge in the numbers of models appearing in Scottish churches, predominantly in coastal towns and villages, but also in Glasgow, a city with an international reputation as formerly a shipbuilder to the world. Almost all of these models represent the working-class industrial history of their communities, and in some cases this is a personal history, for others the loss is of a way of life. In 2014, one model has been included as part of a church memorial to a ship lost in the Second World War, as the church community connected to a wider community of relatives of those lost at sea. This is the first and only model still in a Scottish church to have an actual connection to a ship lost at sea, HMS *Exmouth* (see Case Study 37). These later models all demonstrate the importance of representation for communities, and their sense of connection, especially for places in a process of change.

³⁸⁴ Lawrie, *Largo and Newburn Parish Church; History of Largo Kirk*, p.12.

³⁸⁵ National Museums of Scotland, ref. T.1926.17.

³⁸⁶ Kenny, McMillan and Myrone, *British Folk Art*, p.126.

One ship model that has lost its church, rather than the more frequent occurrence of a church that has lost its model, is now in the collection of the Scottish Fisheries Museum at Anstruther (see Case Study 22). It is of a steam drifter, *Standfast* WK191, and was made by J Bertram and presented to the John Ker Memorial Church in Edinburgh.³⁸⁷ Its date of build is not known, but it is also based on a model in the collections of the National Museums of Scotland, the 1907 steam drifter *Violet*, made in 1953.³⁸⁸ Bertram gave the model in honour of the minister Rev C A Grant, and named it *Standfast* in reference to the Grant clan motto, the fishing registry number is also invented as a reference to Rev. Grant's birthplace of Wick. The church closed in 1981, and was subsequently demolished, by which time the model had already been donated to the Fisheries Museum in 1979, possibly at the time that the church was being wound up.³⁸⁹



Figure 24: Steam drifter *Standfast* now on display at the Scottish Fisheries Museum, Anstruther

Sometime in the 1970s, although the precise date is unrecorded, another hobby model maker George Atkinson at Kinghorn gifted a small, highly stylised model of a

³⁸⁷ Scottish Fisheries Museum, Anstruther, ref. ANSFM: 1979.69.

³⁸⁸ The model in the collections of the National Museums Scotland, *Violet* KY251 (T.1953.27) was made by P. A. Rumbelow of Great Yarmouth, scale 1:32. The original vessel was built in 1907 by W. Geddes of Portgordon, Morayshire, for Wm Watson, Cellardyke.

³⁸⁹ Edinburgh, Merchiston, United Presbyterian Church, John Ker Memorial United Free Church, 1883-1981, Records of Free, United Presbyterian, United Free and other Protestant Church, CH3/1254, United Free Church United Presbyterian Church, National Records of Scotland.

16-gun three-masted ship, which now stands on a table at the rear of the church, and sometimes on a window sill, at an area of the church where the congregation gathers after the service to share tea and biscuits (see Case Study 15). This informal meeting space is filled with leaflets about the church and its activities, information about the more famous model in the church, the *Unicorn*, and various charities the congregation support. There is no information about the small model on the table and the name of the maker and approximate date was only established by talking over a cup of tea after a Sunday morning service with some of the older members of the church. George Atkinson was a local sailor, who enjoyed making things with wood in his retirement, and there was no particular ceremony or reason for the gift (or that can now be recalled). It was made sometime in the 1970s, and is accepted as a personal gift made as a sign of his affection for his church.



Figure 25: *Unnamed model at Kinghorn Parish Church*

This study has found no definite recordings of models arriving in churches in the 1980s, although, as will be discussed later in this chapter, the models at St Ebba's in Eyemouth have no dates associated with them and may be from this period. However, two models were donated to churches in the 1990s. One is a Norwegian sailing barque, gifted to the Kirk of St Nicholas Uniting, the church in which the Dutch *Schip*

was displayed in front of the Aberdeen Shipmasters Society's loft for centuries, but which had not had a model since that was removed in 1840. The new model was a gift from the Norwegian state-owned oil and gas industry (see Case Study 2). It was gifted in about 1990 at the time of the creation of the Oil Chapel in the Drum's Aisle, as part of a refurbishment of the medieval St John's Chapel in the north transept at St Nicholas Kirk, a kirk that had been split into two churches, East and West, under the same roof since 1596.³⁹⁰ The Drum's Aisle joins the two churches as a central but entirely separate nave. In the twentieth century, as the city's population moved out to new suburbs the large East and West churches, and many of the city centre 'daughter' churches which had been built in the nineteenth century as chapels of ease for the large populations, or which had split from the Established Church during the Disruption, were no longer required.³⁹¹ From the end of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries local churches began to come together, culminating in the Union of the Churches in 1929,³⁹² undoing the divisions that had been created during the Disruption of 1843. The Kirk of St Nicholas Uniting, was formally established by new covenant in 2002 as 'a union of the congregations in a local ecumenical partnership under the banner of 'Kirk of St Nicholas Uniting' as a union between the Church of Scotland and the St Nicholas Congregational (United Reformed Church), which allows for shared but separate use of the building.³⁹³ Within this ecumenical partnership sits the UK Oil & Gas Chaplaincy. Aberdeen's industries have been dominated by oil and gas exploration in the North Sea since the 1960s and for decades it has been regarded as the oil capital of Britain.³⁹⁴ Aberdeen has a long trading history with Norway, and with the North Sea oil and gas industry divided along the continental shelf between the UK, Norway and

³⁹⁰ St. Nicholas' Cathedral and Cooper, *Cartularium Ecclesiae Sancti Nicholai Aberdonensis*; Church St. Nicholas of rellegiate and Jacobus Cooper, *Cartularium Ecclesiae Saneti Nicholai Aberdonensis* (Aberdeen: Soc Hod Spald, 1892), Vol. 2, p.354.

³⁹¹ The Kirk of St Nicholas Uniting, *Timeline* (Aberdeen: 2005) <http://www.kirk-of-st-nicholas.org.uk/Uploads/Downloads/Timeline.pdf>; Duncan Forrester, "Worship Since 1929," in Forrester and Murray, *Studies in the History of Worship*, p.181.

³⁹² J. H. S. Burleigh, *A Church History of Scotland* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1960), p.405.

³⁹³ The Kirk of St Nicholas Uniting, *Timeline*.

³⁹⁴ A. Kemp, *Official History of North Sea Gas and Oil: Volume 1, the growing dominance of the state* (Routledge, 2011); special collections at University of Aberdeen, <https://www.capturing-the-energy.org.uk/aberdeen/>

Denmark with the British offices based in Aberdeen, these close links continue.³⁹⁵ The arrival of the *Ryvingen* ship model is a visual reminder of the links between Scotland and Norway. The minister of the time, Rev James Stewart, does not recall there being any particular service for the model arriving, or that it was discussed by kirk session; in his words, 'it just arrived.'³⁹⁶



Figure 26: Norwegian barque model hanging in the Oil Chapel, Aberdeen

The following year, 1991, the minister of St Monans' church purchased a model of the steam drifter, *Pursuit* KY152, from an antiques shop (see Case Study 12).³⁹⁷ The money for the purchase had come as a bequest from Mr & Mrs Hamilton who had left it to be spent on 'something to enhance the church'.³⁹⁸ The model was made by a local model maker, now the technician and model maker at the Scottish Fisheries Museum, Alan Whitfield. Whitfield made it in 1979 from plans of an English steam drifter published in *Model Boat Magazine*, but adapted it to represent a local boat owned by

³⁹⁵ Clark, *Port of Aberdeen*.

³⁹⁶ Rev. J. C. Stewart, *Ships in churches* [Email]. Message sent to M. Greiling (MGreiling@aberdeencity.gov.uk) 14/07/2014, 14:43.

³⁹⁷ L. Fitzpatrick, *RE: Standfast Steam Drifter Model*

³⁹⁸ *Ibid.*

the St Monans' fisher family the Woods. The original wood-hulled screw steamer, *Pursuit*, was built at St Monance in 1907, Official Number 125253, and registered at Kirkcaldy, listing the owner James Wood of St Monance.³⁹⁹ *Pursuit* was requisitioned during the First World War, and sunk off Penzance in April 1918.⁴⁰⁰ This is an accurate scale model of a local fishing boat, representing a specific vessel with a known history tied to the location of the church and the people in it, and is a marked difference to the models that had gone before. For the first time this is not a ship of state, but a small coastal craft, and it has a name and registry number correct for an actual vessel, owned by a known local family. The *Pursuit* is a much humbler craft than the models of Upper Largo and Burntisland, where the models are of named historic vessels of a more or less local connection. The model of the Fifie made by William Hunnam for Chalmers Memorial Church may have been an accurate model of the type, but its name and fishing number were a fantasy; the *Margaret Chalmers* was intended as a typical example of the class, even the half-hull model at Auchmithie is an amalgam of several boats, whereas the *Pursuit* is a very distinctive and specific vessel with a precise connection to that community. Displayed in the church alongside a ship of Nelson's navy, this model represents a turning point in churches displaying models from a working life tradition. This practise has continued, and becomes the dominant theme for the subsequent models installed in Scottish churches to date.

³⁹⁹ *The Mariners' Almanac and Tide Tables*, p.241; *Mercantile Navy List*, 1916.

⁴⁰⁰ J. J. Colledge, *Ships of the Royal Navy. Vol. 2, Navy-built trawlers, drifters, tugs and requisitioned ships from the fifteenth century to the present* (Greenhill, 1989).

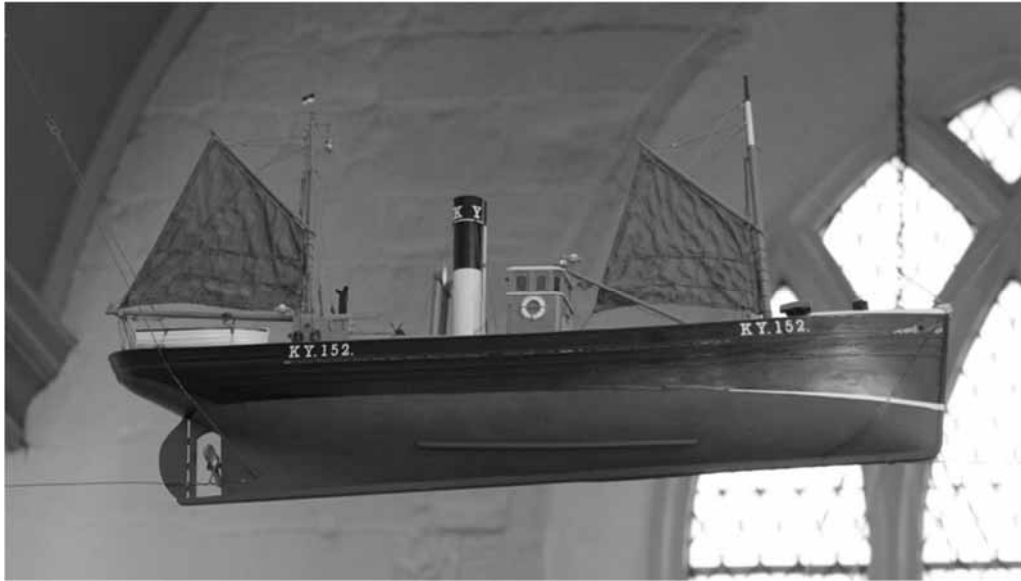


Figure 27: *Steam drifter Pursuit hangs parallel to the Mars model at St Monans Parish Church*

A decade after the *Pursuit* was hung up in St Monans' church, another working vessel, another Fifie named *Families Pride* KY399,⁴⁰¹ was donated to St Ayle Church, Cellardyke, in 2003 (see Case Study 9).⁴⁰² This model has a family connection for the donor, not in relation to a full sized vessel but because the model was made by the donor's step-grandfather from orange boxes. The model had been a Christmas present sometime around 1947, the donor had it restored in 2003 and then donated it to the church. It initially sat in the church vestibule but was moved permanently into the body of the church soon after, and was used as a decoration by the minister for the funerals of people 'with fishing connections.'⁴⁰³

The following year, in 2004, a model was bequeathed to Glasgow Cathedral and installed in 2007 following consultation with Historic Environment Scotland who own and run the building with the Society of Friends (see Case Study 33).⁴⁰⁴ The Cathedral has a long relationship with both the Trades House and Merchants House, however, in the opinion of Glen Collie, Joint Session Clerk of the Cathedral, 'the only mercantile connection as far as the ship is concerned is that the person who donated it thought it

⁴⁰¹ The 1922 Mariners' Almanac lists KY399 *Families Pride* as a sailing boat registered to Crail and owned by George Grubb. *The Mariner's Almanac and Tide Tables*, 1922, p.463.

⁴⁰² B. Batchelor, *Re: Ship Models - Cellardyke Church*, [Email]. Message sent to M. Greiling (M.Greiling@nms.ac.uk), 20/01/2019.

⁴⁰³ *Ibid.*

⁴⁰⁴ I. M. White, "Votive Ship," *Glasgow Cathedral Chronicle*, 4 April 2007.

would be appropriate.⁴⁰⁵ The Cathedral Chronicle published the following description of the model's arrival:

At the end of 2004, the Society of Friends was bequeathed a ship model by the last Sheriff Stanley Gimson with the request that the two-masted brig be hung in the Cathedral in the manner of a votive ship as a reminder of the Clyde's tradition of shipbuilding. After discussions with Historic Scotland it was agreed that best location for the ship would be the St Nicholas Chapel at the east end of the Lower Church, – St Nicholas being the Patron Saint of Sailors. At the end of February this year, the ship was finally installed on the south wall of the Chapel. Votive ships have been hung in churches for many hundreds of years and may have been gifted in thanks for safe delivery from a perilous journey or as a simple reminder to the congregation of a long-standing association with the sea or shipping and the community's indebtedness to those who risk their lives in the business of fishing and trading. Last October the Society outing visited St Monans Church in Fife, where two such models can be seen. The ship is fixed to the wall by a very slim bronze bracket, commissioned by the Society, and, as is customary, faces east with its bow slightly raised. As the model is fixed quite high up on the wall, the best vantage point is from the top of the steps leading down to the St Nicholas Chapel. I am sure that the ship will be of great interest to the many visitors who come to the Cathedral.⁴⁰⁶

It is interesting to note that the models of St Monans' church were an inspiration for the Glasgow cathedral committee, and also, in common with the model at St Andrews, that the appropriateness of the model was due to its age. There is nothing inherently 'Glaswegian' about brigs as a type, they were the work horses of the Royal Navy and also common in the mercantile marine throughout the nineteenth century, frequently as package ships for short voyages. There is nothing to suggest when or who made the model. It was restored prior to being installed at the cathedral, and the conservator could recall no distinguishing features to provide clues to its age.⁴⁰⁷ Whilst not the same degree of 'working' vessel as the Fifies and steam drifters an unnamed brig could be considered a working ship when compared to something like the larger warships discussed previously.

⁴⁰⁵ G. Collie, *Glasgow Cathedral - Web Enquiry*, [Email]. Message sent to M. Greiling (M.Greiling@nms.ac.uk), 13/02/2017.

⁴⁰⁶ White, "Votive Ship," Hon Secretary, Society of Friends of Glasgow Cathedral, 2007

⁴⁰⁷ S. Umpleby, conservator, *Re: Glasgow Cathedral Votive Ship Model* [Email]. Message sent to M. Greiling (M.Greiling@2013.hull.ac.uk), 13 February 2017, 10:02.

5.5 Cockenzie Old Parish Church Models

However, the Glasgow model is very much the exception for the models installed in the first eighteen years of the twenty-first century. In Cockenzie and Port Seton, where William Hunnam had donated his model of a Fifie in 1905, there was to be an explosion of model working boats, brought together by an arts festival set up in 2006. The 3 Harbours Arts Festival was created to celebrate the heritage of the harbours of Cockenzie and Port Seton and 'art in unusual places.'⁴⁰⁸ Originally conceived as a walking trail around the villages to see the model boats in cottage windows, the idea resulted in a model boat exhibition at Cockenzie Old Parish Church hall in 2007. The organiser described the reasons behind the festival and the exhibition in a publication about the model boats of the town:

the small fishing communities of Cockenzie and Port Seton have been replaced by a much larger community, no longer dependent on fishing. Boat building and the industry associated with it no longer exists. It is the model boats which commemorate the days when the old sailing fifies headed out for the herring...It is the model boats which remind us of family lives and of vessels no longer berthed in the harbour.⁴⁰⁹

Six model boats came into the Old Parish Church following the 2007 model boat exhibition, some immediately after, and others over the years since, and subsequent model boat shows (see Case Studies 24 – 29). One Fifie model, named *Sunshine* LH258, was made by Thomas Hunnam, nephew of boatbuilder William Hunnam who made the model at Chalmers Memorial Church, and is almost identical to it. Thomas Hunnam gifted the model sometime after the 2008 3 Harbours Arts Festival Model Boat Show. The Hunnam family were boatbuilders and fishermen going back several generations in the area; Thomas and William being the son and grandson of a family of three brothers who were all drowned when their boat *The Brothers* was lost in a storm off Yarmouth fishing in 1890. The Mariner's Almanac 1937 lists a Cockenzie motor fishing boat LH258 *Sunshine*,⁴¹⁰ owned by Mrs M Dickson & J Dickson Junior, 31-82 Tons. The Dicksons were related to the Hunnams by marriage. The actual boat *Sunshine* belonged to

⁴⁰⁸ Y. Murphy, *Boatie Blest: Model Boats of Cockenzie and Port Seton* (Port Seton: 3 Harbours Arts Festival, 2008), p.5.

⁴⁰⁹ *Ibid.*

⁴¹⁰ *The Mariners' Almanac and Tide Tables*, 1937, p.497.

Tommy Hunnam's uncle, and their family boats were always called *Sunshine* or *Day-spring*.⁴¹¹



Figure 28: Models of fishing boats boats adorn every surface at Cockenzie Old Parish Church

Three of the models that came into Cockenzie Old Parish Church following the first model boat show in the church hall were made by one man, Bob Scott. An 'incomer' to the village, who moved from South Shields to East Lothian in 1985, Scott was a keen amateur model maker.⁴¹² He became friends with the owner of an online model boat shop selling kit boats, and Scott's models are all kit-built models of steam drifters and a motor trawler related to the east coast fishing industry which can be purchased from the online retailer.⁴¹³ Another model of a steam drifter named *Ugie Vale*, is from an unknown model maker, having been acquired by the donor from an Admiralty office, he realised that he did not have room for it at home and decided to donate it to the church.⁴¹⁴ One of the other models is a two-dimensional depiction of a motor ring-net trawler named *Lily of the Valley*. The original *Lily of the Valley* boat was owned lo-

⁴¹¹ Murphy, *Boatie Blest*, p.52.

⁴¹² *Ibid.*, pp.70-3.

⁴¹³ Kit from Mount Fleet Models.

⁴¹⁴ Conversation with donor Andrew Mack at Cockenzie Old Parish Church, 20 January 2019.

cally by members of the church. Motor ring-net boats became popular after the Second World War with many purchased via a government scheme to encourage the post-war fishing industry. A sailing Fifie named *Lily of the Valley* is also depicted in the modern Friendly Society of Fishermen banner on display in the church.



Figure 29: Banners and other maritime related objects decorate Cockenzie Old Parish Church

Cockenzie Old Parish Church is the traditional home of The Friendly Society of Fishermen 1813-1973, the former members of which still meet to parade through the town with the Society's banners every five years, although the Society was wound up in 1975.⁴¹⁵ Copies of the original banners, plus a more modern banner are on display in the church. The church is filled with items from fishing boats and relating to the historical connections of the inshore fishing industry: navigation lights are hung either side of the pulpit and a light above the pulpit, representing the masthead light, are lit for sermons. An anchor, propeller, helm wheel, carved fish and life rings painted with the names of local fishing boats are on every window sill and table. The local boats often

⁴¹⁵ Cockenzie and Port Seton Fishermen's Association Box, Historic Environment Scotland SCRAN: Scottish Fisheries Museum, Scotland, H. E. Scran: Learning Culture Heritage, Scotland's East Coast Fisheries project. Edinburgh, Historic Environment Scotland.

had names referencing biblical verses, such as *Scarlet Line*, and the life rings from these boats, painted with their names and fishing registry numbers are hung in front of the church windows. On the wooden panelling on the wall to the left of the pulpit and communion table is a painting of a sailing vessel with a golden cross on the sail, and the word *Oikoumene*, a Greek term meaning the whole inhabited world, and the symbol of the World Council of Churches, which was painted by the former minister Rev J L Smellie, (1956-1976). Rev. Smellie also painted a scene of a motor fishing boat passing the nearby power station superimposed with a crucifix which hangs in the vestry. Photographs of past ministers displayed in the vestry show that the accumulation of maritime artefacts only started in earnest in the ministry of Dr Knox 1980-1985. One photograph shows that the navigation lights and steering wheel were installed during his time. The model boats have added to this display and the overall effect is of a small local maritime museum, but without interpretative labels.

5.6 *HMS Exmouth and Wick St Fergus Church*

This memorialisation of maritime communities in the church continues at the furthest north of the ship models, which is found at Wick St Fergus Church. In 2014, a model of the E class destroyer HMS *Exmouth* was donated to the church from the HMS Exmouth Association (see Case Study 37). The model is the only diorama model of all the Scottish church ships, and is in fact of two vessels, HMS *Exmouth* and *U22*, the German submarine that torpedoed and sank the British ship in January 1940. HMS *Exmouth* was escorting an ammunition ship to Scapa Flow when it was torpedoed and lost with all hands off the coast of Caithness at Wick.⁴¹⁶ The first that the public knew of the sinking was when bodies washed up on the shore at Wick a week later. Many of the bodies were wearing life jackets and wreckage from a lifeboat was found. The captain of the ship being escorted, fearing attack by the submarine, continued on to Shetland where the alarm was raised, but despite making it into the lifeboats no survivors were found. In total eighteen bodies were washed ashore and buried with full military honours in a war grave at Wick cemetery.⁴¹⁷ Due to the restrictions on reporting and the difficulties in travelling during wartime, none of the crew members' families were pre-

⁴¹⁶ "The HMS Exmouth 1940 Association," 2001. <http://www.hms-exmouth1940.co.uk/home.html> (Accessed 14/03/2017).

⁴¹⁷ "Fifteen Buried in One Grave," *John O Groat Journal* (Caithness), 2 February 1940, p.1.

sent at the mass funeral, although representatives from all the armed services, local dignitaries and clergy from the Church of Scotland, Church of England and Roman Catholic church were present, along with the townspeople.⁴¹⁸ In June 2001, it was reported that divers had found the destroyer's wreck site twenty miles off Wick.⁴¹⁹ On 2 September 2001, relatives of those men lost on the ship were taken out to the wreck site for a remembrance ceremony with representatives of the Royal Navy and the church. It was at this occasion that the HMS Exmouth Association was formed, 'with the aim of furthering an interest in this fine ship and perpetuating the memory, courage and comradeship of the entire ship's company...[and] intention to maintain a strong and continual link with the community of the Wick St. Fergus Church of Scotland.'⁴²⁰ The association sends money for church flowers in January each year, and it also sends two wreaths for Remembrance Sunday, one for the church and one for the war graves in Wick Cemetery. The wreck site has subsequently been given protected War Graves Status to prevent scavenging trophy hunters. In 2005, a memorial plaque was erected in the church along with a cap badge and a book of remembrance with a list of all crew member's names, photographs etc. A White Ensign was donated by the Admiralty. The ship model, a scratch-built diorama showing both HMS *Exmouth* and the German submarine which sank it, was gifted to the church at a service in May 2014. It was made by Leslie Darton, son of Stoker 1st Class, Leslie Charles Darton, who was killed on board HMS *Exmouth* in 1940. He described making the model 'from scratch, i.e. not a commercial plastic kit but using mainly balsa wood, dowel, wire and odds and ends.'⁴²¹ The model was donated to the Sea Cadets by the HMS Exmouth Association and it was felt that the most appropriate place for it to be displayed and preserved was with the white ensign, memorial plaque, photograph, ships badges and remembrance information in 'Exmouth Corner' at the church. This model is the most personal of all the recent models given to Scottish churches, made by a man who nev-

⁴¹⁸ *Ibid.*

⁴¹⁹ "Divers find destroyer wreck," BBC, updated Wednesday 27 June 2001, 15:24, accessed 03/03/2019. <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/scotland/1410336.stm>

⁴²⁰ "The HMS Exmouth 1940 Association." <http://www.hms-exmouth1940.co.uk/home.html> Accessed 14/03/2017.

⁴²¹ Correspondence with J. Cormack, local contact for HMS Exmouth 1940 Association, 21/05/2017.

er met the father who was drowned at the loss of the ship represented. It is a personal memorial, and also a focus for the other relatives of men lost on that ship who previously had no grave to visit. It also marks an event of great importance to the town of Wick, representing a time when the whole town was required to take on the responsibilities of the country, burying the dead with full honours, and on behalf of the grieving families who were not able to attend the funeral. The annual Remembrance Day service and presentation of wreaths at the memorial and in the church is an expression of the desire to continually remind the community and reiterate the story. There is also increasing interest from family historians, genealogists who visit sites associated with their family stories. This is borne out by the guest book in 'Exmouth Corner' and by John Cormack, the curator of the church's memorial, who meets any and every interested person who contacts him about the ship for a tour of the sites associated with it. As well as providing access to the model in the church, the ensign, and the binder filled with the history of the ship and its crew, photographs of past Remembrance Days and Exmouth Association events, John Cormack will drive visitors to the war graves at the cemetery and the brewery warehouse which was used as a make-shift mortuary. This personal approach makes the experience of the retelling of the events of 1940 extremely poignant, and one can easily imagine the care with which the townspeople took on the task of burying the unknown dead washed up on their shore. The model is the only one in Scotland of a ship lost at sea, and is the only memorial of its kind. The U-Boat depicted was also a war casualty several years after the loss of the *Exmouth*,⁴²² and so in a sense the model is a memorial for both crews.

⁴²² "The HMS Exmouth 1940 Association." Accessed 14/03/2017.



Figure 30: *HMS Exmouth memorial corner at Wick St Fergus Church*

The most recent model, at time of writing, to have been installed in a Scottish church is a small, mass-produced yacht model which was presented as a gift for the minister at St Ayle Cellardyke. The model has been customised with a label reading *AC 52 Rev*, the personalised licence plate of the minister's car, and was given at the time of his retirement in 2018.⁴²³

These models demonstrate that the tradition of displaying a ship model in churches has continued, and indeed can be said to be thriving, in churches around the Scottish coast. The twentieth century saw the arrival of the first small working boats in churches, connected to the fishing communities along the east coast. The majority of ship and boat models represented either fishing or trading boats; drifters, trawlers, sloops and brig, barque and clipper ships. The fighting ships represented are either armed merchantmen. i.e. Sir Andrew Wood's ships, or the anomalous Dutch eighteenth century warship at All Saints' in St Andrews. Only the *HMS Exmouth* and *U22* diorama model is intended as a memorial for a ship lost in action, but the others all represent loss of a different type, loss of industry, loss of community identity. What all

⁴²³ Batchelor, *Re: Ship Models - Cellardyke Church*, 20/01/2019.

of these twenty-three models have in common is the desire to evoke a sense of place, a connection to the local history and of memory for that location.

Chapter 6: An Enduring Maritime Cultural Practice

The Virgin Mary, with a crown of gold on her head, and the infant Jesus in her arms, stood as if in life in the altar-piece; the holy apostles were carved on the chancel; and on the walls above were to be seen the portraits of the old burgomasters and magistrates of Skagen, with their insignia of office: the pulpit was richly carved. The sun was shining brightly into the church, and glancing on the crown of brass and the little ship that hung from the roof.

The Sand-Hills of Jutland, Hans Christian Andersen, 1860⁴²⁴

This study has examined the quantity and diversity of ship models found today in Scottish churches as well as those models that were previously displayed in Scottish churches, but which are now in the care of museums. The evidence presented in this thesis illustrates a cultural maritime practice that has continued in Scottish churches since before the Reformation and endures as a living tradition to the present day. By undertaking a survey of all the ship models currently in Scottish churches it is possible to make comparisons across the country and across time periods, nationally and internationally. This study has, for the first time, brought together all the ship models in Scottish churches into one body of research, and has systematically surveyed and photographed the models and attempted to verify all the stories associated with them. By untangling the individual histories of the models, their makers, donors and churches, this thesis contributes to the understanding of maritime communities and the significance of their place in the community of the church.

6.1 Findings

This study has found 37 ship models in 26 churches around Scotland. A table listing all of the models discussed in this thesis can be found in the appendices as well as individual case studies for each model. Twenty of the models are in churches that are now the denomination of the Church of Scotland, four are in Scottish Episcopal churches, one is in a newly interdenominational church, and another a Free Church.⁴²⁵

⁴²⁴ H. C. Andersen and A. S. Bushby, *The Sand-hills of Jutland, with seventeen other stories* (London: Richard Bentley, 1860), p.36.

⁴²⁵ See Case Study 22, *Standfast* and the John Ker Memorial Church.

6.1.1 *What are the models?*

Seventeen of the models are of warships or armed merchant men, thirteen are fishing boats, six are clipper ships or other large sailing merchant ships, and only one, the newest church ship model, installed in 2018, is of a sailing yacht.

They are all warships and working boats, with the exception of the 2018 yacht. There are no other pleasure craft, no rowing boats, ferries or paddle steamers. Instead, they all represent either power through naval warfare or wealth through trade and industry. The majority have a connection to their locality, either through a personal link, such as the HMS *Mars* model at St Monans, or the type of vessels used at that port, such as the fishing boats along the Fife and East Lothian coasts.

Very few of them might be considered accurate models. Only three were made by professional ship or boatbuilders; the half-hull model of *Brothers* at Auchmithie is a boatbuilder's type used for taking off hull lines, the *Margaret Chalmers* at Port Seton was made by a professional boatbuilder, William Hunnam, and the model in the Old West Kirk at Greenock was commissioned by Robert Steele from the model makers at his own shipyard. Similarly, the model made for King James VI, is likely to have been commissioned by his brother-in-law King Christian IV and may well have been produced by model makers at the Danish shipyard where the Scottish shipbuilders Balfour and Sinclair worked. Professional model makers were certainly responsible for the model at Glasgow Cathedral, *Ryvingen* at St Nicholas Uniting in Aberdeen, and the steam drifter model at St Monans. James Welsh at Aberdeen may also be considered a professional model maker, indeed he signs himself shipbuilder, although there is no evidence that he was responsible for building any vessels larger than those that were installed in the churches. Welsh is the first recorded named model maker to be paid for making a model; however, his models are fantasies of ships, and their value does not lie in their accuracy of detail or construction. The majority of ship models found in this study were made by amateur model makers and are to varying degrees inaccurate. None of these models, with their exaggerated dimensions and remnants of enthusiastic restorations and re-rigging, can tell maritime historians anything about ship or boatbuilding that could not be more accurately gained from other more reliable sources; maritime archaeology, contemporary paintings, illustrations and Navy Board

models. In this sense, the majority cannot be considered accurate, but each model is useful for illustrating a moment in the history of their church and the relationships within maritime communities – communities that in later years ‘existed largely in the minds of [their] members,’⁴²⁶ and which used the models as ‘symbols of community... mental constructs; [that] provide people with the means to make meaning.’⁴²⁷ This study has considered these maritime communities and how they have used ship models in churches as symbols both for the contemporary maritime guilds, and, for the twentieth-century and later models, to represent links to community heritage, as a ‘selective construction of the past which resonates with contemporary influences.’⁴²⁸ Their function as examples of maritime folk art, as sailor art, will be considered later in this chapter.

6.1.2 *Where are they?*

Geographically, all the models are in coastal churches around Scotland, the most inland are the models in Glasgow and Edinburgh, but even these cities are close to large ports and navigable rivers. The majority of the models are found along the east coast, from as far north as Wick to close to the English border at Eyemouth. The only west coast models are at Ayr, Saltcoats, Greenock and Glasgow. The models can be found in small village churches such as those at Auchmithie, St Monans, and Cockenzie & Port Seton, as well as in major city centre churches such as St Nicholas Kirk in Aberdeen, Glasgow Cathedral and St Mary’s Episcopal Cathedral Church. It is interesting to note that no models were found on the Scottish islands. This may be because the tendency with the remote churches was towards a total abstinence in all areas that might be considered Popish, their churches being famously sparse internally. The denomination of the majority of churches with models is Church of Scotland; twenty of the models are, or were, in buildings that are now Church of Scotland, only four are in Scottish Episcopal churches, one is in the interdenominational St Nicholas Uniting Kirk, which used to be solely Church of Scotland, and one was in the John Ker Memorial church which was United Presbyterian Church, then United Free and latterly Church of Scotland. Enquiries with other church denominations such as the Methodists did not find

⁴²⁶ Cohen, *Symbolic Construction*, p.98.

⁴²⁷ *Ibid.*, p.19.

⁴²⁸ *Ibid.*, p.99.

any ship models. Six models have been removed from their churches of origin and are now in museum collections; the 1590 model from South Leith is on display at the National Museum of Scotland, the *Schip* and three surviving James Welsh models from Aberdeen are in the collections of Aberdeen Art Gallery and Museums, and the *Standfast*, formerly at John Ker Memorial Church, is now on display at the Scottish Fisheries Museum in Anstruther. Of those 31 models still displayed in churches their locations inside the buildings vary a great deal, but all are inside the main body of the church. Only twelve are actually hanging from the ceiling by chains, seven are on tables, seven are on windowsills, four are attached to the wall by brackets and the model of the Fife *Margaret Chalmers* at Port Seton is balanced on the rafters above the communion table. Some, such as the models at Tulliallan & Kincardine, and Portlethen are suspended immediately above the main dais and are clearly visible to all the congregation throughout the service. Where the models are associated with maritime guilds and shipmaster's societies, such as at Aberdeen, Burntisland, Ayr, Greenock and Kinghorn, they were frequently displayed above or alongside the Sailor's Loft. This practice was discussed in Chapter 3. Where there is no designated seating area for sailors, the models are placed in a variety of locations around the church; windowsills and small side tables are common for the modern models from the mid-twentieth century onwards. The older wall-mounted models, such as *Brothers* at Auchmithie, and *Caledonia* at Saltcoats, are attached by brackets at the rear of the nave, *Brothers* actually having been attached to the top of the door into the church on the nave side. There is no uniformity in direction of travel to be found in the study of these models; they are as likely to be bows away from the communion table, see St Monans's two models, as they are to be bows towards the communion table, as seen at Carriden. Neither are they consistently hanging with bows towards east or west. Rather, this study has found that the requirements of the functioning church and the space available has more influence on how the models have been displayed. At a time when the maritime guilds were providing funds for church building, and paid for their own seating lofts, then their models were displayed conspicuously hanging from the ceiling and the cost and effort that entailed. As the maritime guilds and benevolent societies waned, so too did their financial contributions to the upkeep of the church fabric, and it was no longer neces-

sary to signify their presence in the church to the wider congregation. The use of low-cost display solutions, such as tables and windowsills that do not interfere with the physical fabric of the building, are more practical and require less intervention. They also allow for 'unauthorised' models to arrive into churches, as can be seen at Cockenzie Old Parish Church. Easily accessible models can also be incorporated into minister's sermons, as described at St Ayle Church, Cellardyke and Saltcoats.

Having established the types of ship models in Scottish churches, and where they are located both geographically and within the body of the church, this research has made some conclusions as to why they are there. This thesis has demonstrated that the motivation for donors to display models in churches has changed over the centuries. The surviving ship models all date from after the Reformation and the three oldest models from the late sixteenth and the seventeenth century. The permissibility of ship models in the post-Reformation church was due in large part to the ancient use of maritime metaphors in Christian teachings from the earliest times. These older models in particular were all making powerful statements of association for mariners through their placement in the church in front of the sailor's guild lofts, a symbolic position in the highly-charged realm of seating in the church. Chapter 3 described how important the location of church seating was to all guilds and how it expressed their standing in the community. The oldest model is linked to royalty and its presentation to the Trinity House, who had paid for the construction of South Leith Parish Church, is the clearest demonstration of how important and powerful the mariners were to the wealth and success of the nation at that time. This model is also connected to the history of witch-hunting pursued by James VI and illustrates how real belief in magic and superstition were at that time. These early ship models were a visible reminder for the other trade guilds, the landowners and all those present, of the wealth and status of the mariners in their town. The model that hung in front of the Aberdeen Shipmasters Society was of a Dutch warship, which signified not only the city's mercantile links to the Staple port of Veere, but also celebrated the coronation of King William, the new Protestant king recently arrived from the Netherlands. The model of the Scottish flagship, *Unicorn*, which although not a contemporary with the sixteenth-century ship of that name, nevertheless still dates from approximately the second half of the seven-

teenth century and is therefore the oldest ship model still displayed in its original church context in Scotland. However, there is no evidence to support the story that it was made by French prisoners of war, or even by the crew of the sixteenth-century warship *Unicorn*, which was captured by the English in 1544.

There are no surviving church ship models dating from the eighteenth century, except for the model that was presented in the 1950s to All Saint's Scottish Episcopal Church, St Andrews, by the sister of the writer Hugh Walpole; however, there is no evidence that it was previously displayed in a church. There are references to a model called *Bon Accord*, commissioned by the Aberdeen Shipmasters Society, to hang in the now demolished St Paul's Episcopal Church, Aberdeen, in 1739. That model, along with at least four others, is part of a ghost fleet of lost ship models, all of which disappeared at the beginning of the nineteenth century; these models are considered in Chapter 4. The churches at Ayr, Tulliallan & Kincardine, Burntisland and Greenock all have references to older ship models that 'fell to pieces'⁴²⁹ at around the same time that the old churches were also in states of decay and disrepair. Some of these lost ships were replaced decades later, for example at Ayr in 1802, Tulliallan & Kincardine in 1870, and Greenock in 1864. Others had to wait longer, for example, the model of HMS *Mars* was taken down and sold off during renovations in 1828, returned again in 1905, and finally replaced in Burntisland in 1962.

Chapter 4 considered how Scotland experienced a boom in church building and rebuilding as it recovered from the financial toll of the wars with France in the nineteenth century. New urban industries brought more people into the cities causing churches to expand to meet demand. These new populations brought a diversity in religious practices and beliefs, and the century was marked by the Disruption of 1843 which saw the established church in Scotland split into multiple factions. The ship models installed during the nineteenth century mostly date from the pre-Disruption period, three with links to the Napoleonic wars from churches at Ayr, Saltcoats and St Monans, and four from newly built churches at Aberdeen and Portlethen. The models installed after the Disruption were all replacements for older lost models. The characterful and whimsical models made by James Welsh were for three new churches built

⁴²⁹ Smith, *History of Greenock*, p.111.

in Aberdeen in the 1820s, and to honour a charismatic preacher who built up a following in the city. None of the new churches created after the Disruption are recorded as having had ship models installed until much later, such as the new Chalmers Memorial Church built in 1905, which indicates that these models were associated with the established church. The new churches at Carriden and Bo'ness both moved their existing models from the old church buildings into their new churches when they opened.

Chapter 5 considered in detail the models installed in churches in the twentieth century and the first decades of the twenty-first century, beginning with the construction of a new church at Port Seton in 1905. The model at Chalmers Memorial Church, part of the United Free churches, was used to raise funds for building the new church, and it has the date of the church written on its hull and sails as part of a fictitious fishing registry number. It is the first recorded model of a fishing vessel to be displayed in a Scottish church, although the half-hull model of *Brothers* at Auchmithie dates from a similar period and is possibly older; there is no confirmed date for when it appeared in the church. The twentieth-century models are characterised by new churches seeking to create the impression of being older than they actually are, with All Saint's at St Andrews and St Mary's Cathedral in Edinburgh providing examples of models installed in the 1950s representing ships from previous centuries. These were then followed in the 1960s by much older churches at Largo and Burntisland reclaiming their ancient maritime heritage by installing new models, both replicas of fifteenth- and sixteenth-century fighting ships associated with their history. These examples show how ship models in churches can be used to allude to important historic events and that status and meaning for the church in the wider community by this time had become linked to ideas of continuity, authenticity and longevity.

From the 1970s onwards, the ship models appearing in Scottish churches are dominated by working vessels, in particular those associated with the fishing industry. This is best illustrated by Cockenzie Old Parish Church, which from the 1980s onwards began to decorate its walls and windows with motifs and objects connected to its maritime past; a minister painted a Biblical boat motif on one wall next to the pulpit dais and then followed navigation lights, life-rings, carved fish, and following a harbour arts festival came six model fishing boats. The effect is of a small local maritime museum,

and with the navigation lights arranged around the pulpit the church has almost become the ship as described by the early Christian teachers mentioned in Chapter 2. These small coastal churches are using ship models to make statements about their heritage as the traditional fishing industries disappear and the last members of their congregations who remember that way of life are also disappearing. In this sense then these ship models became memorials to a lost way of life and to the generations of people who lived by fishing. They also became increasingly personal statements and memorials, as the church became seen as a place for remembering what is lost. This is clearly demonstrated by the only Scottish church ship model to have been installed explicitly as a memorial to a ship lost at sea; the model of HMS *Exmouth* at Wick St Fergus Church, which serves as a visual reminder of an event which happened decades before, and augments the existing war memorials to connect the people of the town of Wick and the descendants of the men lost on the ship. The twentieth- and twenty-first-century ship model are used to recall past glories and events important to their community's sense of place, histories which might otherwise be forgotten, and they perform a memorial function whether for named individuals or for a way of life.

6.1.3 *Who are the model makers?*

It is not often that the name of the model maker is recorded. Of the 37 models in this study only nineteen have a named or known model maker (including the model known to have been made by craftsmen at Robert Steele's shipyard) and only eight were made by known sailors or shipbuilders. The model makers vary from survivors of the Napoleonic War, such as William Dunlop at Saltcoats, and those who are creating a personal war memorial for those lost at sea, for example Les Darton's model at Wick St Fergus church, which is also a personal memorial to his father who died in the wreck. Some of the model makers are hobbyists with maritime backgrounds, such as sailor George Atkinson, who made the small model at Kinghorn Parish Church in the 1970s, and Sir Christopher Furness, who served in the Royal Navy during the Second World War. James Welsh, who has no recorded professional maritime links, having been a stonecutter and joiner, appears to have been a hobbyist turned occasional professional model maker, whereas William Hunnam was a professional boatbuilder, who also made models, and used his Fifie model to raise funds for building a new church. Eleven

of the ship models are from churches with associations to mariner's societies such as Aberdeen Shipmasters Society, and the churches as Kinghorn, Greenock, Burntisland, Bo'ness and Carriden, which had seating areas specifically designated for sailors. Some of the model makers express family connections through their models, such as Les Darton's memorial to his father's ship HMS *Exmouth*, but also Tommy and William Hunnam's models recall family connections to the fishing industry represented in their models; it is telling that William Hunnam's father and uncles were lost at sea fishing off Yarmouth in 1890.

6.1.4 *Who are the donors?*

Perhaps not surprisingly, more donors are recorded than model makers, with 25 of the models having their donors mentioned, including the shipmaster and sailor societies as well as individuals. This study has found that the donors range from shipmasters, boatbuilders, fishermen, as well as in the example of Dr Dorothea Walpole (the only woman associated with a Scottish church ship model) a sister donating as a memorial to her brother.

These models not only have a history and relevance to the people who made and displayed them, but they can also give an insight into the people who came to own them, in particular artists and writers who have found inspiration in the church ship models. For example, the model of HMS *Mars*, which disappeared from St Monans church in 1828, came into the possession of several artists, including Royal Academician, Sam Bough, and William Fleming Vallance, and then John Lorimer before being returned to the church in 1905. The writer Hugh Walpole had owned the model given to All Saints' St Andrews by his sister, and it had been displayed in his study. It is not clear whether any of the Scottish artists and writers used these models in their work; however, maritime religious themes were common in nineteenth-century art and literature, for example the work of Caspar David Friedrich, and the Danish author Hans Christian Andersen, as referenced in the quotation at the start of this chapter. Hans Christian Andersen, that master of fairy tales and Danish Romantic literature, visited the German resort of Saxonian Switzerland in the late 1820s, a destination made famous by the German Romantic artist Caspar David Friedrich in some of his most iconic work, such as 'Wanderer über dem Nebelmeer (Wanderer Above the Sea of Mists),

painted in 1817. Andersen wrote about the region in his travelogue in 1831.⁴³⁰ Friedrich's own work includes much maritime imagery, and he often includes sailing ships as a metaphor for life; for example, 'On the Sailing Boat' (1819), which has a newly married couple sailing towards a church, and 'The Stages of Life' (1835), where the masts of a ship form a cross in the centre of the painting. Almost 30 years later, Andersen wrote about a church ship model in *The Sand-hills of Jutland* (1860), as quoted at the start of this chapter. In it, the main protagonists are described worshipping one Sunday, in 'a large, handsome church, [that] had several hundred years before been built by the Scotch and Dutch,'⁴³¹ but which is now dilapidated and the way to the church is hampered by drifting sands that eventually, at the tragic conclusion to the story, cover the church completely. Hanging inside the church is a ship model, and as the hero dies,

the little ship that hung under the roof moved towards him and Clara. It became large and magnificent, with silken sails and gilded masts; the anchor was of the brightest gold, and every rope was of silk cord, as described in the old song. He and his bride stepped on board, then the whole multitude in the church followed them, and there was room for all.⁴³²

These examples demonstrate how artists across disciplines of art and literature in the nineteenth century took inspiration from each other and used the religiosity of the maritime metaphor of ship models in churches as inspiration. This illustrates how these models have been used as aesthetic inspiration as well as guidance for artists using ships in their work. Much of the literature on the history of ship models gives examples of artists using models from churches in their work. Nance finds indications of *ex-voto* church ships in the drawing of a fifteenth-century Flemish engraver, W.A., of a 'kraeck,' (or carrack) evidenced by the shape of the hull and lack of detail in the rigging. He cites examples of Dutch artists such as Bruegel who may have drawn from church ships, and suggests 'the skill in ship-painting for which Dutch painters, beginning with Pieter Bruegel, gained so well-earned a fame was in part due to the ease

⁴³⁰ H. C. Andersen and C. Beckwith, *Rambles in the Romantic Regions of the Hartz Mountains, Saxon Switzerland etc* ([S.l.]: Bentley, 1848).

⁴³¹ Andersen and Bushby, *Sand-hills of Jutland*, p.36.

⁴³² *Ibid.*, p.46.

with which they could find church-ships to study.⁴³³ For illustrations of *ex-voto* models in situ, Nance points to Carpaccio's *'The Apparition of the Ten Thousand Martyrs'* (c.1515) which shows models arrayed inside a church as the martyrs process in.⁴³⁴ However, these models were not only a practical help to make paintings and descriptions of ships more accurate, but were also used by nineteenth-century romantic writers and artists as inspiration for themes and metaphorical devices. One can imagine that Bough, Vallance, Walpole and others would have been familiar with the works of Friedrich and Andersen, as well as the wider practice of artists having ship models in their studios.

This study has found that whilst these models may not be of interest to maritime historians for their accuracy in relation to full-sized ships, they are examples of sailor's art, whether made by or for sailors or as representations of maritime communities. Sailor's art is typically exemplified by woolwork pictures and pincushions. Where church ship models differ from most examples of sailor's art, however, is that these models were for the most part originally intended for public display and are not private or domestic in nature. The scarcity of information about the individual model makers puts them in line with many of the characteristics of what has become known as folk art. As Kenny states, 'folk art is rarely seen as the function of individual genius but rather as the expression of a collective voice.'⁴³⁵ As Ayres describes, 'Above all folk art was an activity. It was not developed out of intellectual theory, neither was it limited by it; its discipline was craftsmanship.'⁴³⁶ This is a view that places ship model making firmly into this category, along with trade and shop signs and ship figurehead carvings. Many other forms of folk art also have links to rituals and rites, such as corn dollies and other harvest-related traditions, including church pageants and processions. Indeed, the use of ship models in saints' day processions to churches is a common thread, linking churches, trades and crafts for centuries. The loss of these saint's days was a blow to the town guilds: as described by Todd in Chapter 2, 'the guilds walked in order of their standing in the community, [the loss of the saint's day proces-

⁴³³ Nance, *Sailing-ship Models*, p.21.

⁴³⁴ *Ibid.*, p.14.

⁴³⁵ Kenny, McMillan and Myrone, *British Folk Art*, p.129.

⁴³⁶ J. Ayres, *British Folk Art* (London: Barrie and Jenkins, 1977), p.6.

sions] diminished the guild and undermined its corporate status in the town.⁴³⁷ The ship model, with its easily understood religious metaphors and connections to Biblical texts, was a rare post-Reformation survivor.

Kenny suggests that what all the variety of objects described as Folk Art have in common is that:

they all, to a greater or lesser degree, exist outside mainstream culture, and on the periphery of fine art. This marginal status is often manifested in comparable formal qualities, shaped by the use of found materials, varying levels of technical skill and idiosyncratic construction. Equally, they all nourish potent fantasies about 'authenticity' and 'purity', mixed into a heady cocktail with the addition of a dash of nostalgia.⁴³⁸

This is an accurate summary of the models created by James Welsh in Aberdeen at the start of the nineteenth century, as well as many of the models of fishing boats and other less-refined vessels in churches such as those at St Ebba's in Eyemouth, and the clipper ship *Ariel* at St Mary's cathedral church in Edinburgh; they may not be pleasing to an expert eye interested in correct proportions, but they nevertheless have an amateur charm and inventiveness which speaks to the majority of viewers. Chatterton also acknowledges the ship model's role as an agent of nostalgia, 'apart from its illustrative and historical appeal, the close study of these models has a sentimental and romantic attraction which continues unrivalled.'⁴³⁹ This nostalgia can be seen reflected in the models created to replace the missing models at Burntisland and St Monans, the inclusion of the brig at Glasgow Cathedral, as well as the numerous fishing vessels referencing lost industries and their associated ways of life. The physical form and construction of church ship models is also a compelling argument for their inclusion in the category Folk Art. As McMillan wrote for the 2014 Tate exhibition on Folk Art:

⁴³⁷ Todd, *Culture of Protestantism*, p.187.

⁴³⁸ Kenny, McMillan and Myrone, *British Folk Art*, p.126.

⁴³⁹ Chatterton, *Sailing Models Ancient and Modern*, p.18.

A great quality to be found in many works of folk art is the inventive use of waste or excess materials. The traditional, permanent media of the Academy such as marble, stone and bronze are replaced with bone, wood, straw, broken crockery or woollen uniforms. This is an art mostly by, and for, the working class.⁴⁴⁰

Certainly, this is true of the models made by James Welsh, for example in his use of broken china to form the figureheads. This use of base materials also establishes the link between these models and the medieval wax votive offerings discussed in Chapter 2.

Some church ship models are very far from this quaint vision. Many of the models have been made by professional model makers working in shipyards and their models are as accurate as the full-sized versions they copy, and any notions of amateurish idiosyncrasies would be far from the mark. However, this should not exclude them from the designation Folk Art either. These models are, perhaps better described as Lambert and Marx say, 'things with a distinctive individual character.'⁴⁴¹ Unlike Outsider art, which McMillan writes, 'involves a self-taught artist working in a particularly idiosyncratic, highly individual manner, often driven by compulsion, desire or religious fervour...it has its origin in tradition. It has been passed down and therefore is representative of a collective.'⁴⁴² It is here in the passing down of knowledge, belief and skills that church ship model have their strongest claim to be viewed as an example of what Fine calls 'identity art.'⁴⁴³ Kenny describes this as 'moving away from a focus on the finished product and the response it invokes, identity art privileges the characteristics of the creators and the circumstances and process of making.'⁴⁴⁴ For the Scottish church ship models, this would be the makers with maritime backgrounds, the sailors returning from war, the boatbuilders and family connections to maritime stories. The church ship models can be seen as embodying more than their designated function as either votive or commemorative or decorative. They also represent the communities for whom they were made. Kenny states, 'Folk art [...] is rooted in the idea of commu-

⁴⁴⁰ Kenny, McMillan and Myrone, *British Folk Art*, p.13.

⁴⁴¹ Marx and Lambert, *English Popular Art* (London; New York: B. T. Batsford, 1951), p.v.

⁴⁴² Kenny, McMillan and Myrone, *British Folk Art*, p.12.

⁴⁴³ *Ibid.*, p.127.

⁴⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, p.127.

nity, in the sense of being produced for and often by a group.’⁴⁴⁵ In the case of church ship models this community can be seen not only as the shipmasters’ societies that commissioned the models, but also the congregations who accepted the models as part of their church and part of their worship experience.

A recurring theme with all the models, from the *Unicorn* to the steam drifters of Cockenzie & Port Seton, is that they are looking back at maritime technologies and ways of life now past. They are all expressing a connection, proud and nostalgic, to a maritime past, which has more or less commonality for the onlooker, ‘the past is transmitted only selectively according to contemporary purposes, and recalled selectively without historical rigour;’⁴⁴⁶ as seen with the replica models at Largo and Burntisland, their significance to the modern congregation is how they represent a story, and not in their accuracy. This study has found that ship models in Scottish churches represent a continuing tradition, as demonstrated by the fact that the installation of ship models persist even when churches change denominations, such as at Auchmithie, and move buildings, for example at Carriden, Bo’ness, and Saltcoats. Ship models disappear and reappear, for example at St Monans and Tulliallan & Kincardine, and once they leave their churches they continue to have new communities of understanding in museums, as seen at Aberdeen, Anstruther, and the National Museums of Scotland. Regardless of their date, type, donor or maker ship models are an enduring and significant feature of the physical and cultural fabric of Scottish churches.

⁴⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, p.127.

⁴⁴⁶ Cohen, *Symbolic Construction*, p.101.

Appendix 1: Map showing distribution of ship models across Scotland



Appendix 2: Case Studies



Case Study 1: *St Nicholas Kirk, Aberdeen*

Denomination: Church of Scotland

Name: Schip

Type: Dutch 5th Rate

Date of Build: c.1689

Builder: Unknown

Donor: Alexander Mackie

Length Overall (mm): 1160

Breadth (mm): 580

Height (mm): 1310

Material: wood, paint, cotton thread, gesso

Construction: Block with built up topsides

Restoration: Various 19th Century Fully Restored 1982

Hull: Natural wood and black sides with red painted bulwarks and inside of gun ports, white under waterline. Gun ports not decorated. Two decorated entry ports on each of the quarter galleries.

Figurehead: Gilded lion rampant

Transom: Gilded detail dating from 1982 restoration, three large red and gold stern lanterns above indistinct crest motif

Masts and Spars: black and natural wood

Rigging: Fully re-rigged 1982, no sails

Flags: None, previous metal flags were removed

Location: Originally hanging in front of Aberdeen Shipmaster's Society Loft, St Nicholas East Kirk. Moved to Shipmaster's Society building on Market Street in 1836, and then to 22 Regent Quay, Aberdeen in 1840. On loan to Aberdeen Maritime Museum from 1984 and purchased by the museum in 1998.

The Shipmaster's Society of Aberdeen was founded on 3rd Feb. 1598 by 24 *skipperis maisteris* and *marineris*.⁴⁴⁷ The Society was initially called the Seaman's Box, and was a mutual beneficial society founded to aid those in need, the old, wives of shipwrecked sailors, widows, fatherless children and those in poverty. Contributions were made on a voluntary basis not only by mariners but those in maritime trades or engaged in harbour duties. A fee was payable for entry into the Society following a master's first voyage from abroad, with the amount varying over the centuries. The payment was made by the shipmaster for himself and the sailors belonging to his ship.

The loft in St Nicholas East Kirk, the high church of the city, was constructed for the Shipmasters Society in 1670⁴⁴⁸, and the model was a gift of shipmaster Alexander Mackie in 1689.⁴⁴⁹ This coincides with the proclamation of the coronation of King William and Queen Mary in the town⁴⁵⁰ to be celebrated with a 'sermon in St Nicholas Church...and the touns guns to be dischairgit, and the toune to be in armes, and bonfyres to be sett.'⁴⁵¹ The model hung in front of the loft until the East Kirk was restored in 1836 at which time it was moved to the Society's hall on Market Street until

⁴⁴⁷ Clark, *A Short History of the Shipmaster Society*, p.70; Council Register, vol. mviii. p.324.

⁴⁴⁸ Scottish Burgh Records; Stuart, *Extracts from the Council Register of the Burgh of Aberdeen, 1625-1642*, p.267.

⁴⁴⁹ Clark, *A Short History of the Shipmaster Society*, p.27.

⁴⁵⁰ Records of Aberdeen, St Nicholas/West of St Nicholas Kirk Session, CH2/448/20, 15 April 1689, p.129.

⁴⁵¹ Scottish Burgh Records; Stuart, *Extracts from the Council Register of the Burgh of Aberdeen, 1625-1642*, p.311.

new premises for the Society were constructed at 22 Regent Quay in 1840 and all the contents were moved there.⁴⁵²

In 1984 Aberdeen City Council opened Aberdeen Maritime Museum and the model was part of a number of items from the Shipmasters Society that went to the museum on loan initially and then purchased for the collections in 1998. During the early planning for the new museum, around 1981, the then Keeper of Maritime History, Jake Duthie, approached various leading maritime museums for advice on the model, including Dr Henning Henningsen at the Danish Maritime Museum who had published widely on the subject of Danish church ship models; the National Maritime Museum, Greenwich; the Gothenburg Maritime Museum in Sweden, as well as Glasgow Museums and Art Galleries.

Duthie described the condition of the model thus; “Some of the rigging which is made of cord is original. It has been tarred but is very easily broken. A substantial section of the rigging has been added in the 19th century and seems to consist of cotton twine used in herring nets. The structure itself is almost wholly wooden, with a thick layer of what appears to be creosote and tar added...The deadeyes are made of lead (I think) and there are a few more metal parts – the tin flags for instance and the supports for the large stern lamps.’ Dr McGowan at the National Maritime Museum in Greenwich replied; ‘Your model has all the signs of being a votive model and as I said on the phone, the flags notwithstanding, very probably Dutch. The lion figurehead is no indication of origin as you are probably aware. It was commonly used by most of the northern countries at that time.’⁴⁵³ Dr Henningsen wrote, ‘It is clearly to be seen that the model, especially the rig, has been modernised in later centuries. The white band with the gunports cannot be original. The bowsprit cannot have had a jib-boom, but must have had a small mast with a square-sail at the end. The mizzen mast did not have a gaff and a boom but a long lateen yard with a triangular lateen sail.’⁴⁵⁴ Glasgow Museums replied, ‘about the possible restoration, or should I say alteration, of your

⁴⁵² Clark, *A Short History of the Shipmaster Society*, p.65.

⁴⁵³ Correspondence from Dr A. P. McGowan, 2nd June 1981, reproduced with permission from Aberdeen Art Gallery & Museums.

⁴⁵⁴ Correspondence from Dr H Henningsen, 13th August 1981, reproduced with permission from Aberdeen Art Gallery & Museums,

17th century votive model...I think it would be possible to return the model to a reasonable example of a 17th century vessel. The scale of the model leaves a lot to be desired but a good model maker might well improve it considerably.⁴⁵⁵

The decision was thereby taken to return the model to its original condition. A reputable local model maker was employed to undertake a survey:

The Schip Model

The model appears to be a typical representation of one of the better class of 'votive' ship models. It has certainly suffered from the ravages of time since its first mentioned in 1689, and appears to have undergone various repairs and renovations; alas, these have not all been in keeping with, (as I would envisage) the original period represented by the model.

The Hull

This would appear to represent a "5th" Rate ship of 1670; borne out by the very exaggerated rake to the stem, mast positions, and overall profile. The figurehead is typical of the crowned lion type introduced by Charles the Second for all men of war other than 1st rates. If the three stern lanterns are original, then so too is the transom decoration. I would however think that this has been rebuilt over the years and the large 'hind' motive added. The steeply statted bowsprit, could also be original, as I believe would be the knight heads and cavils on deck.

Masts and Rigging

Overall, the dimensions of the model do not seem grossly incorrect, although the masts do bear the hallmark of the sailor made model, in that they appear too tall. The main mast position and that of the fore and mizzen, are representative of a 5th rate ship of 1670, (Anthony Deane's Doctrine on Naval Architecture). The main gun deck of 22 guns, and the severely raking stem also point to this date. The leads of the forestay and fore topmast stays to the bowsprit, along with those of the Mainstays to the foremast and the mizzen stays to the mainmast are also common to this period. The bobstay below the bowsprit, however did not appear until 1700. The method of setting up the forestay and mainstay with deadeyes, is typical of English practice at this time between 1650 and 1690. If, as has been suggested the model was built in Holland, then these stays would be set up with blocks. It seems that the bowsprit terminated at the point where the rather ridiculous flag staff has been fitted, there would then be a spritsail topmast fitted, which fell into disuse after 1712. The very long jib boom did not appear until much later - 1740, and the inverted 'V' shaped dolphin strikers are of

⁴⁵⁵ Correspondence from G. Cassidy, 8th September 1981, reproduced with permission from Aberdeen Art Gallery & Museums.

even later pedigree - 1819; they serve no useful purpose, and in fact they make handling the spritsail impossible. The preventer stays fitted below the fore and main stays, are probably original although they were not standard practice until around 1700. The fore and main topmasts are I believe original, and their lengths in relation to their respective lower masts are correct for a ship of 1850 - 1870 period. The lengths of the topgallant masts are however totally wrong, as for the same period, they should measure approximately two fifths of their respective topmasts. I would suggest that these have been renewed. The fore and main lower yards carry stunsail boom irons, and although the earliest mention of these is in 1655 for the main, and 1690 for the fore, they were not common until after 1750, so these would also seem to be later additions. The shape of the fore, main and mizzen tops reflects the period from 1720 to 1750, as do the upper catharpins. The tops for a ship of the 1670 establishment would have been circular, and not squared off as on the model. The mizzen mast carries a spanker gaff and boom, these were not common naval practice until 1780 (although they could be found in merchant vessels prior to that date). The complete mizzen mast appears to be of a much later date than the hull, and, would generally have been in two sections for a vessel of this size in 1670.

Taking all the foregoing into account and the fact that the model was first mentioned in 1689, it would be reasonable to say that it originally represented a ship of the 1670 establishment. Over the years it has been re-rigged almost completely at one or more times, and various other changes made to the hull. It is certain that the thick covering of black and white paint has been added at one or other of these times, along with the metal flags, which tend to give the model a 'Peter Pan' air. It is almost certain that if the model is correctly restored and re-rigged as per the 1670 establishment, her overall appearance would be dimensionally quite accurate.

Restoration

As can be appreciated, to faithfully restore such a model requires a great deal of work. This can be summarised as follows: Fully document the model photographically as it stands now; completely strip the model down to the bare hull; clean off all layers of old paint recording all colour changes, in order to find the original finish - possibly natural wood with red inside the bulwarks; renew all masts and yards where necessary, adding all fittings such sheaves, blocks, etc., finally renew all standing and running rigging as per the 1670 establishment.

Signed D Smith 5/7/81⁴⁵⁶

⁴⁵⁶ Condition Report from Donald Smith, Marine Modelmaker, 5th July 1981, reproduced with permission from Aberdeen Art Gallery & Museums.

The subsequent press release from 1984 reads:

The Schip

First mention of this model occurred in 1689 when it was presented to the Aberdeen Shipmasters Society by a local captain, Alexander Mackie. It was originally built in Holland and brought to Aberdeen to serve as a votive model in the Seamen's Loft of St. Nicholas Church. There are perhaps, only a dozen or so models of this type remaining in the country making it of outstanding historical value.

Restoration of the Schip required three years in order to repair the hull, correct errors in repairs done over the centuries, and completely re-rig the vessel in accordance with a 5th Rate warship of Dutch design.

Around 80% of the original material was saved and restored in the completed vessel, with much of the incorrect, non-original material being stripped away completely.

What we see today is the Schip in its full 17th century appearance - a vessel which will form a central part of the Maritime Museum's displays.⁴⁵⁷

Other References

'The east and west churches are under the same roof; for the North Britons observe economy even in their religion. In one I observed a small ship hung up; a votive offering frequent enough in Popish churches, but appeared very unexpectedly here. Some vindicate the practice, and say that the ship only denotes the right the mariners have to a sitting place beneath; but perhaps much may be said on both sides.'⁴⁵⁸

Thomas Pennant, 1769

'In the body of the church hang several large brass chandeliers; and before the upper gallery in the west end, hangs a small ship in full trim, to indicate that the gallery is appropriated for sea-faring people.'⁴⁵⁹

Walter Thom, 1811

⁴⁵⁷ Aberdeen Art Gallery & Museums Collections.

⁴⁵⁸ T. Pennant, *A Tour in Scotland, MDCCLXIX* (Perth: Melven Press, 1979), p.122.

⁴⁵⁹ W. Thom, *The History of Aberdeen ... with biographical sketches of eminent men connected with the bishoprick and colleges* (Aberdeen: A. Stevenson, 1811), vol. II, p.104 .

‘There are three galleries at the west end. The second belongs to the sailors, and has the picture of a ship on the front, and a handsome one, full-rigged, hung before it.’⁴⁶⁰

James Logan, 1818

‘The upper gallery was known as the sailors' loft, from the roof of which, according to a fashion then common in the churches of the city, there was suspended a large model of a full- rigged ship.’⁴⁶¹

Alexander Gammie, 1909

This model is listed in Basil Harley’s *Church Ships*, 1994.⁴⁶²



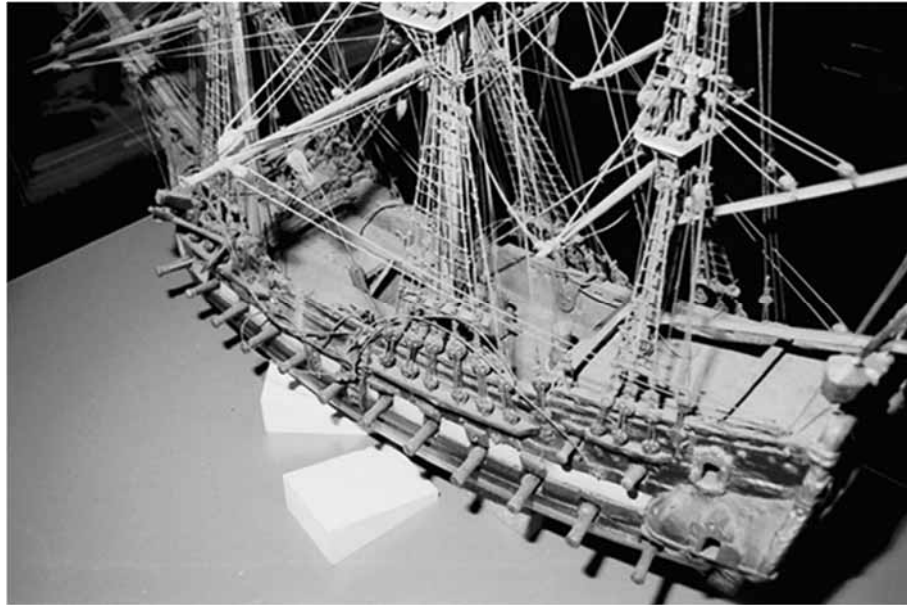
The offices of Aberdeen Shipmasters Society, 22 Regent Quay, c.1966⁴⁶³

⁴⁶⁰ Church St. Nicholas' Cathedral and Jacobus Cooper, *Cartularium Ecclesiae Sancti Nicolai Aberdoniensis* (Aberdoniae: Soc. Nov. Spald. Impensis, 1892), Appendix V: An Accurate and Minute Description of The East Kirk, 1818 by James Logan.

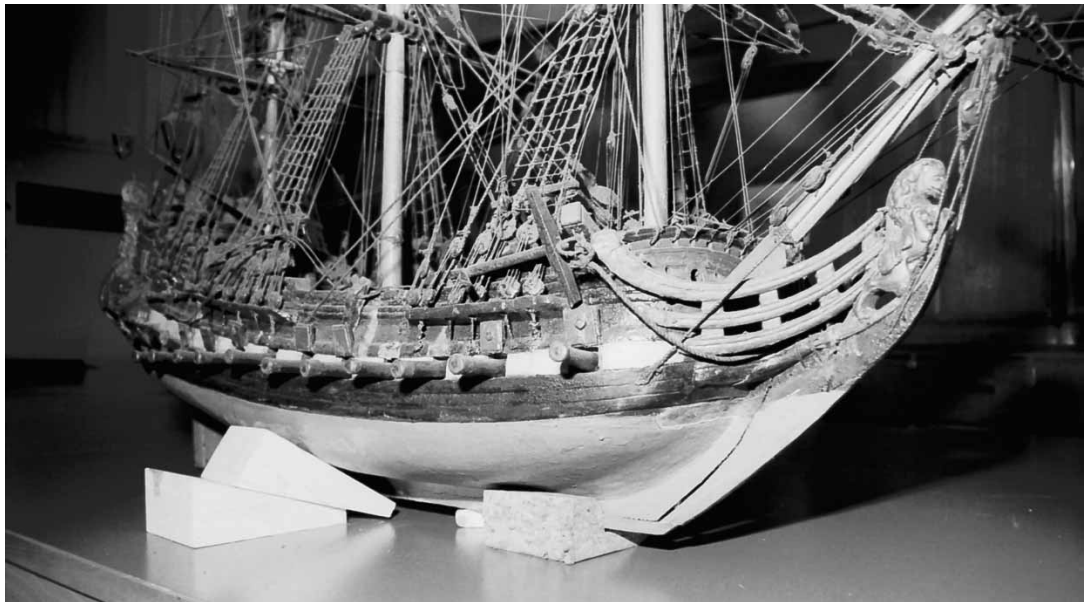
⁴⁶¹ Gammie, *The Churches of Aberdeen*, p.44.

⁴⁶² Harley, *Church Ships*.

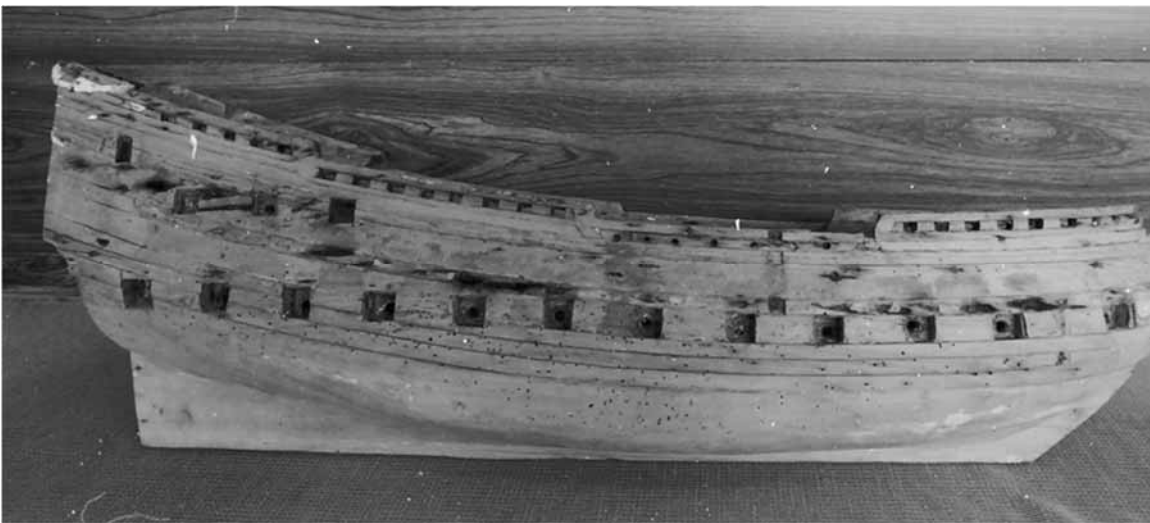
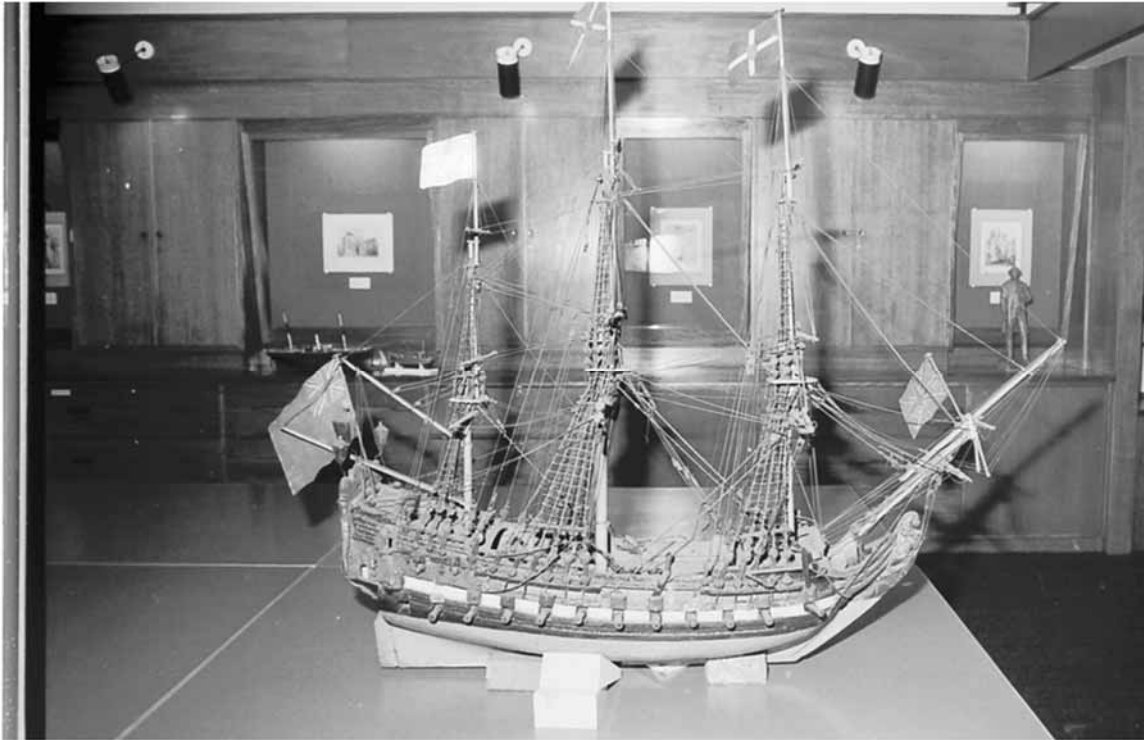
⁴⁶³ All *Schip* photography copyright Aberdeen Art Gallery & Museums Collections, reproduced with permission.



The *Schip* at Aberdeen Art Gallery, 1981, prior to restoration



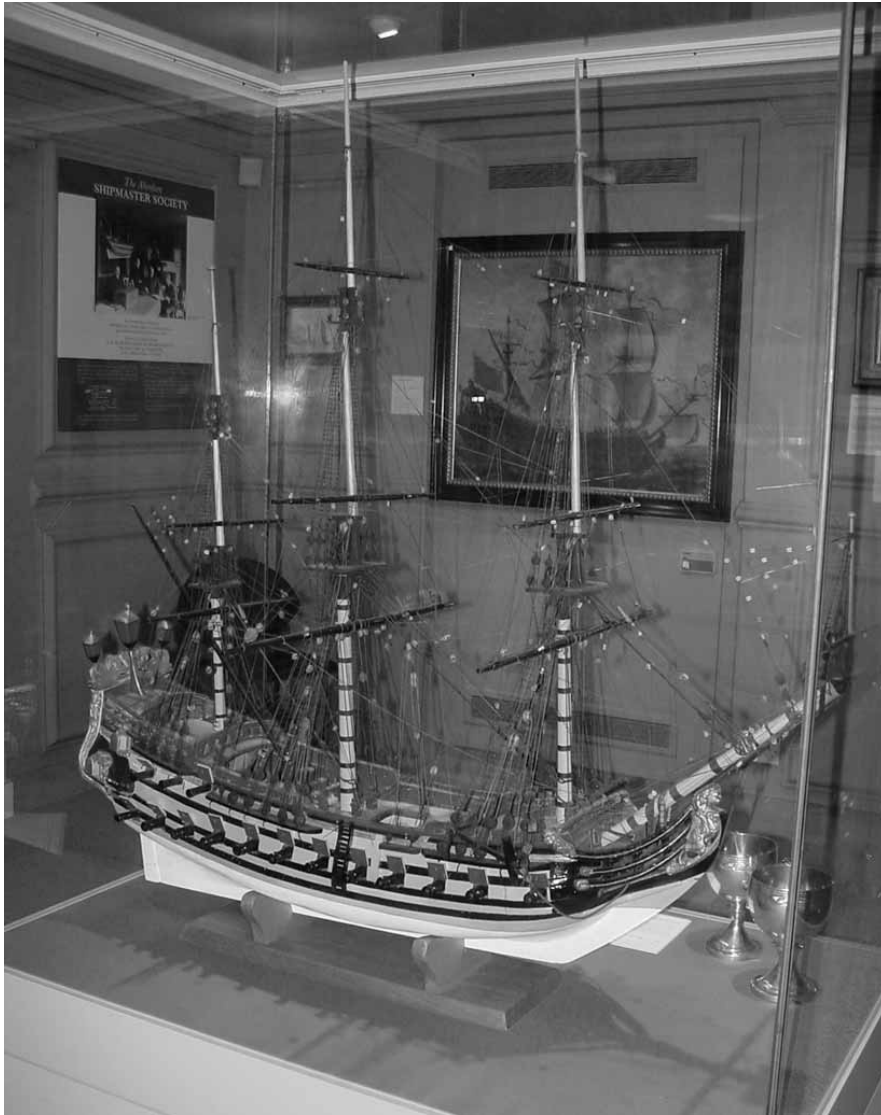
The *Schip* at Aberdeen Art Gallery, 1981, prior to restoration



Evidence of historic woodworm damage was uncovered. In this image one can see how the gun ports were carved out of the solid hull block and then screwed in place.



The restoration involved stripping the entire hull back to bare wood which gives a unique record of the model's original construction



The model on display at Aberdeen Maritime Museum. On the wall behind can be seen a painting which also belonged to the Aberdeen Shipmasters Society, commonly referred to as '*The Scottish Warship*' - a cut down painting of a seventeenth century warship with over painted saltire



Case Study 2: *St Nicholas Kirk, Drum's Aisle, Aberdeen*

Denomination: Interdenominational/Church of Scotland

Name: Ryvingen

Type: Norwegian Three-masted Barque

Date of Build: c.1990

Builder: Unknown

Donor: Norwegian Government

Length Overall mm: 950

Breadth mm: 240

Height mm: 600

Material: wood, paint, cotton thread, metal fittings

Construction: Block built

Restoration: None

Hull: Wood painted red below the waterline with green topsides and a white band at the waterline. Gilded scrollwork on the bow in the style of Viking carvings. Deck bare wood with white painted bulwarks and gunwales. Hatches, capstone and anchors are present, with white railings around the forecastle and poop decks.

Masts and Spars: three masts; fore and main masts square-rigged with single-topgallants, and fore-and-aft rigged on the mizzen, masts and yards painted white

Rigging: Fully rigged, no sails

Flags: Norwegian flag on mizzen

Location: Hanging in Drum's Aisle above the screen to St John's Chapel in the north transept, also known as the Oil Chapel

The model was a gift from the Norwegian state-owned oil & gas industry. Gifted in about 1990 at the time of the creation of the Oil Chapel, a refurbishment of the medieval St John's Chapel in the north transept at St Nicholas Kirk.

St Nicholas Kirk, had been split into two churches, East and West, under the same roof since 1596. The Drum's Aisle joins the two churches as a central but entirely separate nave. In the twentieth century as the city's population moved out to new suburbs the large East and West churches, and many of the city centre 'daughter' churches which had been built in the nineteenth century as chapels of ease for the large populations, or which had split from the established church during the Disruption, were no longer necessary. Throughout the twentieth century the local churches began to come together, in many cases undoing the divisions that had been created during the Disruption of 1843. The Kirk of St Nicholas Uniting, was formally established by new covenant in 2002 as 'a union of the congregations in a local ecumenical partnership under the banner of 'Kirk of St Nicholas Uniting'⁴⁶⁴ as a union between the Church of Scotland and the St Nicholas Congregational (United Reformed Church) which allows for shared but separate use of the building. Within this ecumenical partnership sits the UK Oil & Gas Chaplaincy. The oil and gas industry's interdenominational chaplaincy was established in January 1989, fully funded by the United Kingdom Offshore Operator's Association (UKOOA) now Oil and Gas UK⁴⁶⁵, and was subsequently accommodated at St Nicholas kirk, a further confirmation of the church's established role as the city's primary church.

⁴⁶⁴ The Kirk of St Nicholas Uniting, *Timeline*.

⁴⁶⁵ Oil & Gas UK Chaplaincy, 2014, Accessed 02/02/19, <http://www.ukoilandgaschaplaincy.com/about/chaplaincy-history>

On 6th July 1988 the world's worst offshore oil disaster occurred in the North Sea when the Piper Alpha oil platform exploded killing 167 men. Aberdeen's industries had been dominated by oil and gas exploration in the North Sea since the 1960s and it is still regarded as the oil capital of Britain. The Piper Alpha disaster had a deep and immediate impact on the city. The Oil Chapel was opened by HRH Princess Royal in June 1990, less than a year after the disaster had put the city in the world's headlines.

Aberdeen has a long trading history with Norway,⁴⁶⁶ and it is often said that Norway is closer to Aberdeen than London. The North Sea oil and gas industry is divided along the continental shelf between the UK, Norway and Denmark with the British offices based in Aberdeen. The nature of the multinational industry means that Aberdeen has continued these close links to Norway and many Norwegian businesses have offices based in the city. The arrival of the Ryvingen ship model, named after the lighthouse at the southernmost tip of Norway, is a visual reminder of the links between Scotland and Norway. The minister of the time, Rev James Stewart, does not recall there being any particular service for the model arriving, or that it was discussed by kirk session; in his words, 'it just arrived'.

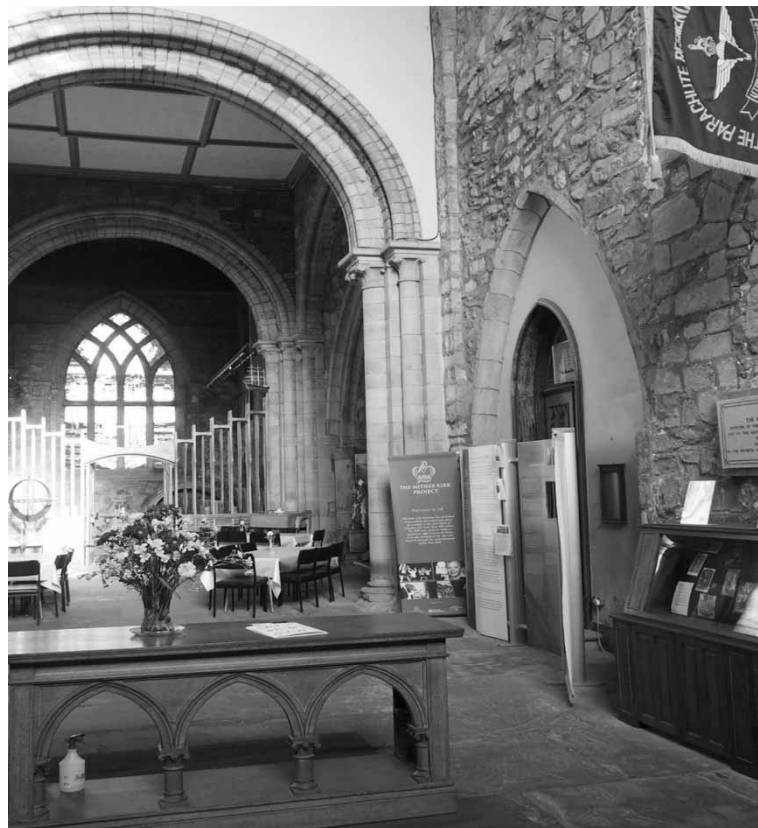
⁴⁶⁶ Clark, *The Port of Aberdeen*, p.68.



Ryvingen model hanging above the screen between the Oil Chapel and Drum's Aisle.



Kirk of St Nicholas Uniting, below Drum's Aisle and the Oil Chapel





Case Study 3: *St Clement's Church, Footdee, Aberdeen*⁴⁶⁷

Denomination: Church of Scotland

Name: Belvidera

Type: Three-masted Sailing Warship

Date of Build: 1828

Builder: James Welsh

Donor: James Welsh

Length Overall mm: 1270

Breadth mm: 330

Height mm: 1860

Material: wood, paint, cotton thread, metal fittings

Construction: Block built

Description: The hull is painted white under the waterline, black and white in keeping with Nelson's navy. The figurehead is a full figure kilted highlander with red jacket and gilded hat. Large entry ports on the quarter decks with an access ladder on the starboard side. There are no figures.

Transom: Gilded with the name written under stern windows

⁴⁶⁷ Photograph copyright Aberdeen Art Gallery & Museums Collections, reproduced with permission.

Masts and Spars: Bare wood

Rigging: Fully rigged, three-masted warship, no sails

Flags: Photographs of the model c.1991 show some flags present at that time, but it is known that the model was re-rigged after being damaged sometime before 1979

Location: Location in church unknown. Given to Aberdeen Art Gallery & Museums Collections

The model is of the Apollo class Fifth Rate sailing warship, HMS *Belvidera*, which was built at Deptford in 1809.⁴⁶⁸ It was made for the newly constructed St Clement's Parish Church in 1828 by a member of the local congregation, craftsman James Welsh.

St Clement's Parish Church replaced a fifteenth century chapel which had fallen into decay.⁴⁶⁹ Having its own parish church represented an elevation to the status of Footdee, which previously part of the larger St Nicholas Parish. Its location close to the harbour and the traditional fishing hamlet of Footdee meant that the area was dominated by seafaring industries. Whilst there is no evidence that Welsh would have seen HMS *Belvidera* firsthand, the ship had become famous as firing the first shots of the short-lived American War of 1812-1815. The ship is represented in several paintings and engravings showing the engagement with the USS *President* in their encounter of 23rd June 1812, and it is possible that Welsh was familiar with the vessel from one of these illustrations.⁴⁷⁰

James Welsh lived in St Clement's Parish in the harbour area of Aberdeen called Footdee (or Fittie). He was born around 1771 and is listed in the 1841 census as a 70-year-old stone cutter, living at Commerce Street in the parish where his first known model was hung in the local church. He went on to build at least two more models for churches around the city; see also the entries for the models *Agnes Oswald* and *Phesdo*.

⁴⁶⁸ J. J. Colledge, *Ships of the Royal Navy: an historical index* (Newton Abbot: David & Charles, 1969).

⁴⁶⁹ Gammie, *The Churches of Aberdeen*, p.56.

⁴⁷⁰ See National Maritime Museum, Greenwich, London, Macpherson Collection, William John Huggins, *Escape of HMS Belvidera*, 23 June 1812 (BHC0598).

The model was loaned to St Clement Street School in the 1970s, where it was damaged by fire, and repaired. It was then moved to the College of Commerce on Holburn Street, Aberdeen from 1979 until 1987, where it hung above a stairwell, but the college was closed in the mid-1980s when the building was condemned, and the model was subsequently stored at Ruthrieston school annexe. Local historian Lys Wyness wrote about the model for local history magazine *The Leopard* and describes her efforts to locate the model; 'When the College of Commerce was condemned a few years ago, the students were dispersed and the "Old Ship" disappeared, presumed lost. After going down some blind alleys, I was advised to phone Mr Irvine, who I was pleased to learn was the Registrar of the College and housed in Ruthrieston School Annexe. When he answered my call, he exclaimed: "What a coincidence, I have just moved the ship from a windowsill, the rain was coming in and I was afraid the ship would get wet."⁴⁷¹ Wyness visited the model with Angus Middleton, 'the last organist and choirmaster in St Clement's Church before its closure' to help identify the model, he was able to confirm it was the model from St Clements Church, 'he recognised the colourful wee kilted figurehead - with legs!'⁴⁷²

St Clement's Church was closed in 1987 and the model was given to Aberdeen Maritime Museum for display in the exhibition 'Ship of Faith' in 1991. The model was then returned to Aberdeen College, successors to the College of Commerce, until finally gifted to the museum in 2004. The model is now in storage, in need of conservation, and not easily accessible to researchers.

Other References:

St Clement's Parish Church List of furnishings etc property of the kirk session 1924

'a model of an old three-decker man of war at one time hung in the church but was taken down and lost trace of for a number of years. Eventually she was restored and refitted and may now be seen in the

⁴⁷¹ Wyness, "Ships of Faith," p.6-8.

⁴⁷² *Ibid.*

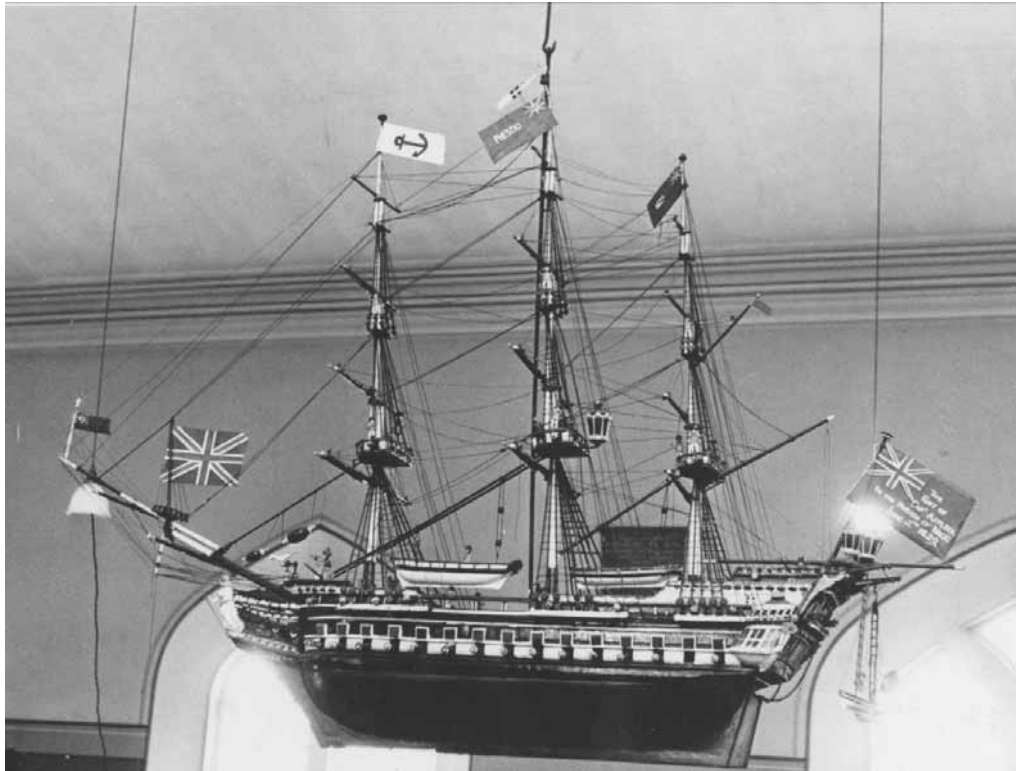
hall of St Clement's Public School where she was placed in a case after the school was rebuilt.^{'473}

'All Welsh's models were solid, bulky affairs. Even so, the Belvidera model has some attractive features to it. Look over the stem and you see a kilted Highlander figurehead. Lift the hatches or the skylight and you see the captain and his officers sitting down to a meal.'⁴⁷⁴

Jake Duthie, 1982

⁴⁷³ St Clements Parish Church List of furnishings etc, 1924, Records of Church of Scotland synods, presbyteries and kirk sessions, CH2/1369/18, Church of Scotland, Aberdeen City Archives.

⁴⁷⁴ Duthie, "Hangman's Son Carved His Fame."



Case Study 4: *Nigg Parish Church, Aberdeen*

Denomination: Church of Scotland

Name: Phesdo

Type: Three-masted Sailing Warship

Date of Build: 1829

Builder: James Welsh

Donor: Andrew Affleck

Length Overall mm: 2180

Breadth mm: 710

Height mm: 1700

Material: wood, metal, glass, cotton thread, paint

Construction: Block with built up topsides

Description: The hull has been fully re-rigged and repainted in blue, white, buff and red, possibly at sometime around 2010. The model is in the style of a 34gun Victory class frigate. The figurehead is painted white with a gold painted crown, a female figure carrying a gold painted sceptre and orb. The deck and bulwarks are painted white and turquoise green with detailing in black and matt gold. The guns are black with matt gold caps and the gunport covers are red. Quarter and stern galleries have glazed windows. The

fighting tops have guns, and the main mast also has a large lantern similar to the stern lanterns. Uniquely, an enormously outsized seagull is standing on the bows of the ship - the only animal or bird depicted on any Scottish church ship model. Behind the seagull stands a crewman with a large white and red bonnet, blowing a long horn. In total there are twenty-two sailors arranged around the model; in the fighting tops, on the topgallants, one standing in each of the small boats and on deck, wearing white trousers, pale blue frock coats with dark neckerchiefs and black hats. Two small boats hang off the stern, connected by an access ladder to the stern davits. Two further small boats hang from davits amidship on the main and quarter decks.

Transom: Blue and white gilded decorations around quarter galleries and transom windows. The transom is topped by three black and gold stern lanterns.

Masts, Spars & Yards: painted white and back with detailing in yellow and red on the exaggerated tops

Rigging: Fully rigged, no sails. Standing rigging appears tarred and is possibly original. Running rigging appears to be recent white nylon cord.

Flags: Large painted tin flag; a very small red ensign on the tip of the bowsprit, a Union flag on the bowsprit, a white flag with a blue anchor on the fore mast, a small red ensign with the name *Phesdo* on the main mast, another small red ensign on the mizzen gives the date 1829, and the large red ensign on the stern reads 'The Gift of Captain Affleck, The New Parish of Nigg, June 7th 1829'

Location: Hanging from the ceiling in the nave in front of the lofts. Now in the collections of Aberdeen Art Gallery & Museums and on display at Aberdeen Maritime Museum.

The second of James Welsh's surviving models, and the first to have human figures and a bird included; Welsh is unique among the Scottish church ship models in adding figures to his models. There is more documentary evidence relating to the history of this model. It was presented to the congregation of Nigg Parish Church on the occasion of the opening of the new church, 7th June 1829. The church was built to replace the derelict thirteenth century St Fittick's church:

'On Sunday last the new church of the parish of Nigg was opened for divine service; by the Rev. Mr. Thom: on which occasion a collection was made for the poor of the parish, which, we are happy to say, amounted

to above £10. The church is a beautiful gothic structure, with a tower of considerable altitude, flanked by angular buttresses, and forms a very striking object viewed from this side of the Dee. The interior is very handsomely finished, and contains sittings for about 1000 hearers. By the liberality of Convenor Affleck, a very elegant and perfect model of a ship of war has been provided, and is hung from the roof of the church - an appropriate ornament where so large a part of the population lead a seafaring life.'⁴⁷⁵

Aberdeen Journals, 10th June 1829

A hand-written note found in the model reads 'James Welsh, shipbuilder, Aberdeen,' while another, undated, note reads;

Ship in Church of Nigg

Was presented by a Captain Affleck when the church was built in the year 1829. It is supposed to be a piece of valuable work. Some years ago when the church was being re-painted a number of boys got into the church and commenced to throw books at the ship and destroyed it. It was repaired and cost between 20 & 30 pounds to put it right again. The parents of the boys paid the account and the matter was hushed up. It was only then that they realised the value of the ship.

Andrew Main⁴⁷⁶

Nigg Parish Church closed and the congregation merged with Torry St Fittick's church around 2010 at which time the model was removed to the Torry church office and then given on loan to Aberdeen Maritime Museum. Torry St Fittick's Church gifted the model to Aberdeen Art Gallery & Museums in 2016.

Other References

'The frigate - Slung high over the body of the kirk interior is the fine model of the frigate Phesdo, one of Britain's men-of-war of the same class as Nelson's Victory. It has hung there since the church was built in 1829, when it was presented to the parish of Nigg by Captain Affleck, who gave his name to Aberdeen's Affleck Street.'

Press & Journal, 1969

'In early June 1829, the new Nigg Parish Church was completed. Standing right on the crest of a hill with nary a house beside it, its "tower of considerable altitude, flanked by angular buttresses, forms a very strik-

⁴⁷⁵ "Opening of Nigg Parish Church," p.3.

⁴⁷⁶ Reproduced with permission from Aberdeen Art Gallery & Museums.

ing object viewed from the Dee". One man who watched the church steeple climb up against the southern skyline, was Convenor Andrew Affleck, a boot and shoemaker who was Deacon of the Shoemaker Incorporation. He stayed on the street named after him - Affleck Street - which then had a clear view over the River Dee and across to the Torry side of the river.'⁴⁷⁷

Jake Duthie, 1982

'From the side lofts in Nigg Parish Church 'Phesdo' a three masted full-rigged frigate, modelled after the type of vessel which patrolled during the Napoleonic Wars, is a sight to behold. It is little wonder the minister and congregation of Nigg are proud of the traditionally hung ship, its magnificent lines, amazing detail and its paintwork fresh and bright. It is shown to best advantage against the stark architectural ceiling and walls of the church'⁴⁷⁸

Lys Wyness, 1991



Phesdo hanging in Nigg Parish Church, 1965

⁴⁷⁷ Duthie, "Hangman's Son Carved His Fame."

⁴⁷⁸ Wyness, "Ships of Faith," p.11.

Images below: *Phesdo* hanging in Nigg Parish Church, two small boats can be seen at the stern of the model, with small figures in hats, and access ladders.



Details of the model *Phesdo*, on display at Aberdeen Maritime Museum



Case Study 5: *Gilcomston Chapel of Ease, Aberdeen*

Denomination: Church of Scotland

Name: Agnes Oswald

Type: Three-masted Sailing Warship, 52-guns

Date of Build: 1830

Builder: James Welsh

Donor: James Welsh

Length Overall mm: 1630

Breadth Overall mm: 580

Height Overall mm: 1850

Material: wood, metal, glass, cotton, paint

Construction: Block with built up topsides

Description: The hull is brightly painted in brown, green, yellow, red and black with multicoloured and gilded swag and bead detailing along the beakhead frames towards the figurehead. The figurehead is a female three-quarter length bust carved from wood with an elaborate hat made up of pieces of blue and white domestic china. A crew of fifteen figures all in Royal Naval uniform of white trousers with black jackets and wearing black hats, can be seen, including two at the quarter galleries, wearing white wigs; a watch cap-

tain on the forecastle blowing a horn; a boatswain attending to two boats hanging on davits; and the rest on the main and quarter decks. A small boat is hanging alongside the access ladder on the port side. The fighting tops on each mast are fitted with guns, and each has a sailor waving his hat or standing to attention. A large gilded lantern is attached to the mainmast top, similar to those found on the transom. The jackstaff, flying the Union flag, is also topped with a lantern.

Transom: Three large gilded stern lights, gilded and blue painted quarter galleries and transom decorated with stars above transom windows. The name is painted in black on a white ground under the transom windows. Empty stern davits suggest the model may well have had additional small boats hanging from it in the way seen on the *Phesdo* model.

Masts, Spars & Yards: Bare wood

Rigging: Fully rigged, no sails

Flags: Cotton and silk, a white ensign at stern, a Union flag on jackstaff at bowsprit, various pennants including a name pennant at the fore mast.

Location: Hanging in front of the end gallery.⁴⁷⁹ Now in the collections of Aberdeen Art Gallery & Museum and on display at Aberdeen Maritime Museum

The model is the third known to have been made by James Welsh, and is very similar in detail to the *Phesdo* model he made for Nigg Parish Church the year before, including the sailor figures and general style of decoration. It was presented to the church as a tribute to Dr Kidd, who was a well-regarded and widely published minister at the Chapel of Ease in Gilcomston area of the city of Aberdeen, later renamed Denburn Parish Church. Dr Kidd's daughter, Agnes, married Captain James Oswald in 1814, some years before the model was made and named after her. Dr Kidd was minister there from 18th June 1801 until his death 24th in December 1834.⁴⁸⁰ He was a powerful preacher, and increased the congregation at Gilcomston to 2000 members. He oversaw the transition of the church from chapel of ease to parish church in its own right,

⁴⁷⁹ Stark, *Dr. Kidd of Aberdeen: A picture of religious life in by-gone days*.

⁴⁸⁰ National Records of Scotland. CH2/1487/1/2, Records of Church of Scotland synods, presbyteries and kirk sessions, Minutes of the Kirk Session of Gilcomston, 1834.

'By an Act of the General Assembly in 1834, Gilcomston was constituted a 'quoad sacra' parish, with power to elect its own kirk session to take control of its own congregational affairs.'⁴⁸¹ Dr Kidd died just one month after the new kirk session was constituted.⁴⁸²

The model was restored by a descendant of Agnes & Captain Oswald in the mid-1940s and placed in the vestibule alongside a bust of Dr Kidd.⁴⁸³ A photograph of the restored model on display in its glass case in the church surrounded by visiting parishioners can be seen in the SMT magazine article 'Ship in the Kirk' of 1951.⁴⁸⁴ Denburn Church was disbanded in 2006 and the building sold in 2010, and it was at this time that the model came into the collections of Aberdeen Art Gallery & Museums.

Other References

'The interior made no pretension to elegance of any kind; the only thing visible, which hard, matter-of-fact utility did not demand was the model of a ship the *Agnes Oswald* hung in front of the end gallery, a symbol of the consequence of the seafaring calling to the population of that period that was to be seen also in some other places of worship in the city.'⁴⁸⁵

James Stark, 1893

'In front of the end gallery there was suspended the model of a ship, the *Agnes Oswald*, a custom which was followed in several of the other churches in the city in those days as a symbol of the importance of the seafaring calling to the population of that period.'⁴⁸⁶

Alexander Gammie, 1909

'Another "lost" model is that of the galleon, *Agnes Oswald*, which used to hang from the gallery of the historic Gilcomston St Colm's Church, Aberdeen, it was jettisoned at some period and later retrieved from an odd corner in the building. Now renovated and restored, this beautiful

⁴⁸¹ Gammie, *The Churches of Aberdeen*, p.19.

⁴⁸² National Records of Scotland, Minutes of the Kirk Session of Gilcomston, CH2/1487/1.

⁴⁸³ Correspondence from Michael Oswald, 14th November 2000, copy held by and reproduced with permission from Aberdeen Art Gallery & Museums Collections.

⁴⁸⁴ Leslie, "Ship in the Kirk." p.45.

⁴⁸⁵ Stark, *Dr. Kidd of Aberdeen. A picture of religious life in by-gone days*, p.96.

⁴⁸⁶ Gammie, *The Churches of Aberdeen*, p.18.

model, enclosed in a glass case, occupies an honoured place in the church vestibule.'⁴⁸⁷

James D Leslie, 1951

'It appears more than likely that James Welsh had a goodly admiration for the eminent Dr Kidd, as did the best part of Aberdeen's population at that time. In honour of the great man, James Welsh dedicated the ship in 1830, to Dr Kidd's daughter, Agnes Oswald.'⁴⁸⁸

Lys Wyness, 1991

Historic Environment Scotland, Canmore Archaeology Notes, available online: <https://canmore.org.uk/collection/1027483>

⁴⁸⁷ Leslie, "Ship in the Kirk," p.45.

⁴⁸⁸ Wyness, "Ships of Faith," p.8.



Close up of the foremast with a silk Union flag on the jackstaff, and a figure blowing a horn. The figurehead is carved and painted with a large hat made up from pieces of blue and white china.⁴⁸⁹



⁴⁸⁹ Main *Agnes Oswald* photograph copyright Aberdeen Art Gallery & Museums Collections, reproduced with permission, all other *Agnes Oswald* images by author.



Embroidered flags and pennants at the main mast



Boatswain waves his hat in salute



The figure of an Admiral wearing a white wig can be seen on both the quarter galleries. Other sailors are arranged around the decks and in the rigging, all saluting or standing to attention



Case Study 6: *Portlethen Parish Church, Aberdeenshire*

Denomination: Church of Scotland

Name: William Law

Type: Clipper Ship

Date of Build: post-1840

Builder: Unknown

Donor: Unknown

Length Overall mm: 1200

Breadth Overall mm: 460

Height Overall mm: 830

Material: wood, metal, cotton thread, paint

Construction: Block built

Description: Solid block built hull with a white painted waterline. Below the waterline is painted copper and black above with the markings of gun ports and a gun deck indicated in black and white paint, highlighted in gold. The gilded male figurehead may be intended to be Rev Law. Life-rings on port and starboard gunwale with *William Law Portlethen* painted on. Name *William Law* painted in white on a blue name

board at bow and *William Law Portlethen* in white lettering on the black transom.

Transom: Painted black with yellow markings to indicate transom windows

Masts, Spars & Yards: painted white and blue

Rigging: Fully rigged, no sails

Flags: Tin flags: Union flag on jackstaff, French tricolour pennant on mainmast, Scottish flag of St Andrews on mizzen mast, and red ensign on mizzen halyard.

Location: Hanging above dais and communion table, bows towards the north and in the direction of the pulpit on the left side of the dais, port side towards the congregation.

The model is named after the church's long-serving minister, Rev William Law (1797-1870). Several stories are told about the antecedents of the model. One such provided by the church: 'this is the name of the model ship, which hangs in Portlethen Church. It was made and presented to the Rev William Law (who became the first ordained minister of Portlethen Chapel in 1841) by one of a party of students who were en route by sea from Leith to, presumably, Aberdeen, when their vessel was caught in a violent storm and wrecked just off Findon. They all succeeded in scrambling ashore but unfortunately the local people were somewhat suspicious of them and would have nothing to do with them. News of their plight reached Mr Law who was quickly on the scene and immediately attended to all their needs and after seeing them warmed, fed and rested, arranged for the resumption of their journey to their destination. As a token of their appreciation and gratitude for the Christian care and concern shown by Mr Law, the model of their ship was made and presented to Mr Law.'⁴⁹⁰

Given Rev. Law's time as a school teacher in the area before becoming the minister, the alternative story that the model was presented to the minister by a grateful former pupil seems more probable.⁴⁹¹

⁴⁹⁰ L. Andrew, church secretary, *Re. Church Ship Model* [Email]. Message sent to M. Greiling (m.greiling@2013.hul.ac.uk) 25/05/2016, 16:46.

⁴⁹¹ "Portlethen Church Rededication on Sunday," p.5.

Other References

'£5 to be invested and interest used for up keep of ship (Rev. Wm Law).'⁴⁹² —

Portlethen Kirk Session Minutes Inventory of church property, 1906

'Portlethen Church Rededication on Sunday: Old Model of Ship - The old model of a ship which has hung in the church for nearly a century has been refitted, and continues to occupy an honoured place. It is interesting to recall that the model, which is one of very few found in churches in Scotland, was made by a student who stayed with the Rev. William Law, at one time minister of Portlethen. The ship is named after him.'⁴⁹³

Aberdeen Press & Journal, 1938

'Portlethen Church was raised to full establishment in 1853, and the first minister, the Rev. William Law, took a keen interest in the education and welfare of the young people, one of whom in gratitude made a model of a full-rigged sailing-ship which he named after Mr Law and presented to the minister. Mr Law, proud of the ship, in turn gifted it to the church, in which it still hangs.'⁴⁹⁴

James D Leslie, 1951

⁴⁹² Records of Portlethen Kirk Session Minutes, 1906, Records of Church of Scotland synods, presbyteries and kirk sessions, CH2/1569/1/1, National Records of Scotland.

⁴⁹³ "Portlethen Church Rededication on Sunday."

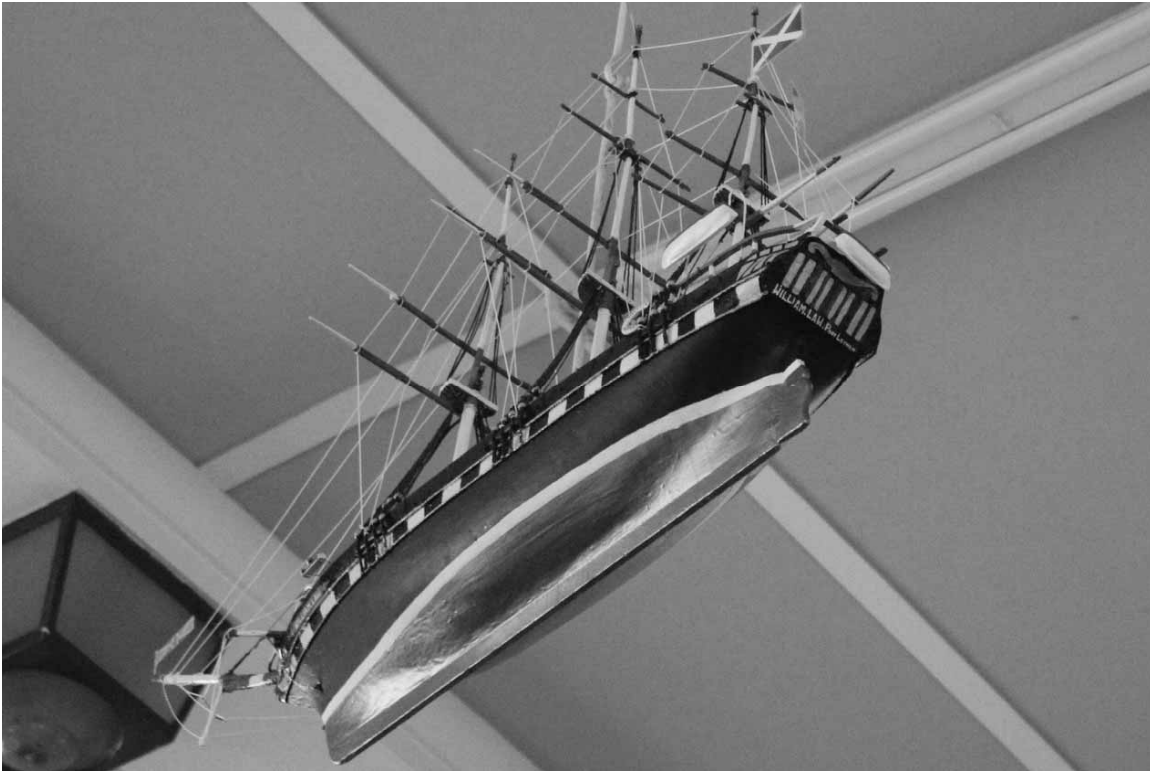
⁴⁹⁴ Leslie, "Ship in the Kirk," p.48.



The *William Law* model hangs centrally above the communion table



Hull details such as gun ports are clearly painted on, and deck details are minimal, but the effect is impressive from the usual distance of a viewer at ground level or from the gallery



The model has been repainted in recent years, the French flag on the main mast may be alluding to the church's minister, inducted in 2017, who comes from France



Case Study 7: *St. Peter's Scottish Episcopal Church, Auchmithie, Arbroath*

Denomination: Scottish Episcopal

Name: Brothers KY173

Type: Zulu

Date of Build: c.1890

Builder: Unknown

Donor: Unknown

Length Overall mm: 550

Breadth mm: 100

Height mm: 150

Material: wood and paint

Construction: Block, Boatbuilders half-hull model on a backing board

Description: Solid, unpainted except for a white painted waterline, painted a brownish red under waterline to the keel. The name *Brothers* is picked out in yellow scroll lettering, highlighted in grey, a yellow line around the gunwale and a small decorative scroll at the bow. The Fishing Number KY173 is written twice in white on a black painted field at bow and stern.

Rigging: None

Flags: None

Location: Above the inside of the main door into the church

The fishing registry number KY173 is listed in the 1895 Mariner's Almanac as being the sailing fishing boat *Wave*, owner John Doig (Manager Smith) Keel in feet 44, whereas KY198 is listed as *Brothers*, owner William Watson, both give registered port: Cellardyke.⁴⁹⁵ However, in 1889 there was a Kirkcaldy boat KY174 named *Brothers*, owned by James Watson at Cellardyke,⁴⁹⁶ so the model may have been given an amalgamated name and number representing any of these local vessels.

The church was built as Auchmithie Parish Church when the area disjoined from St Vigean's parish in 1885.⁴⁹⁷ Church of Scotland services discontinued there in 1980 and the building was sold to the Scottish Episcopal Church in 1983. It is now known as St. Peter's Scottish Episcopal Church.

⁴⁹⁵ *The Mariner's Almanac and Tide Tables*, 1895, p.230.

⁴⁹⁶ "Fishing Boat Heritage," 2017. Accessed: 17/03/2019
<https://fishingboatheritage.co.uk/?s=brothers+>

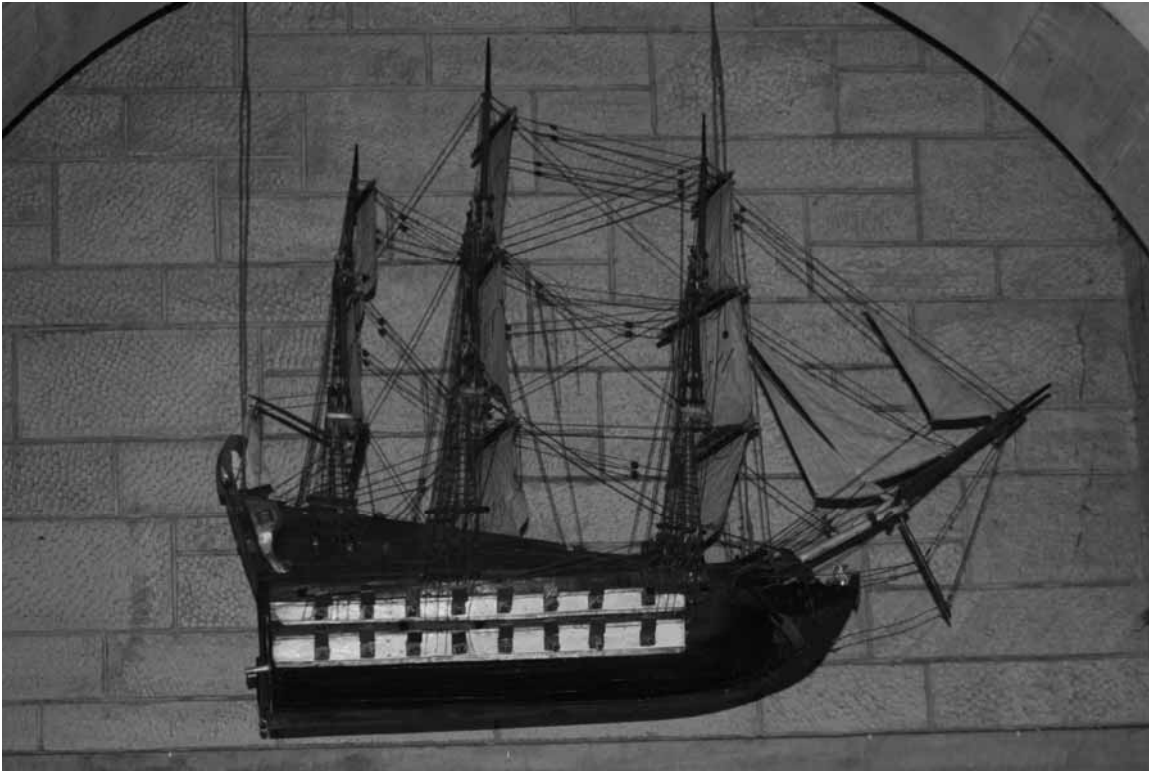
⁴⁹⁷ Places of Worship in Scotland project website. Accessed: 10/01/20,
<http://scottishchurches.org.uk/sites/site/id/4537/name/Auchmithie+Church%2C+Arbroath+Arbroath+and+St+Vigeans+Tayside> 19



St. Peter's Scottish Episcopal Church was built as Auchmithie Parish Church



The model hangs above the door inside the nave of the church



Case Study 8: *All Saints' Church, St Andrews, Fife*

Denomination: Scottish Episcopal

Name: None

Type: 18th Century 38-gun Dutch Warship

Date of Build: Unknown

Builder: Unknown

Donor: Dr Dorothea Walpole

Length Overall mm: 1750

Breadth mm: 470

Height mm: 1360

Material: wood, paint, cotton thread and metal fittings, gesso

Construction: Plank on Frame

Description: Hull is painted black with white and gold painted gun decks highlighted, guns and gun ports are red and gold. The figurehead is a gilded lion holding a saltire, the cross of St Andrews, on a shield. Anchor stocks are painted green with red hoops. Crude quarter galleries are indicated with gilded and red gesso carvings added. Two small gilded lions, possibly also gesso additions, lie on the rail above the transom windows, which are in relief and highlighted with gold paint. The lower masts are white with white tops and tres-

tletrees and spars are bare wood, with black yards with white tips. Being plank on frame construction the model is essentially hollow, and appears to be painted white internally.

Rigging: Fully rigged with sails set

Flags: The flag of the Netherlands hangs at the stern.

Location: North west corner of the church in an archway at the rear of the nave, suspended by wires at the stern and foremast.

The model is said to have been presented to the church by Dr Dorothea Walpole in 1954⁴⁹⁸, sister of the novelist and screenwriter, Hugh Walpole. The church is a modern building completed in 1907, built in a Scottish 17th style with crow-stepped gables on the rectory at one side of the courtyard leading into the church. The church is in the fishing quarter of the historic town of St Andrews, close to the ruined castle to the north and the cathedral to the south, a short distance from the beach.

Other References

'The church is entered at the north aisle of the nave. Passing round the back of the seats, you will find hanging above you a model ship which was presented by Dr Dorothea Walpole in 1954 in memory of her brother Hugh Walpole, the novelist. The model had been kept by him in his study. A watercolour painting at present in the Keswick Museum and Art Gallery shows Hugh Walpole's study with the ship in place. It appears to be an early eighteenth-century Dutch man-of-war, though it is not an accurate scale model and it is impossible to identify as a particular ship.'⁴⁹⁹

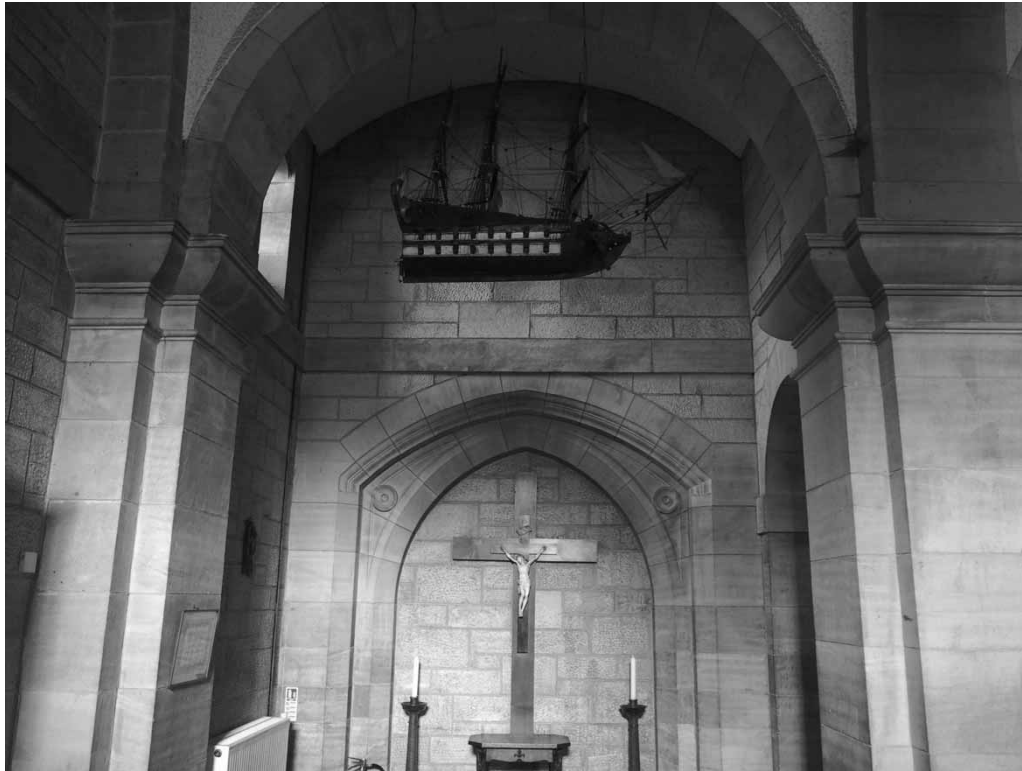
All Saints' Church Website, quote from Basil Harley, 1994

⁴⁹⁸ Harley, *Church Ships*.

⁴⁹⁹ Quotation from Harley, *Church Ships*. <https://www.allsaints-standrews.org.uk/about/the-building/>

All Saints' Episcopal Church, interior. Detail of model ship suspended from ceiling at West end of nave.⁵⁰⁰ Historic Environment Scotland Canmore Record, from a 1998 RCAHMS Listed Buildings Recording Programme survey

All Saint's Church Website <https://www.allsaints-standrews.org.uk/about/the-building/>



The model hangs in an archway at the back of the nave

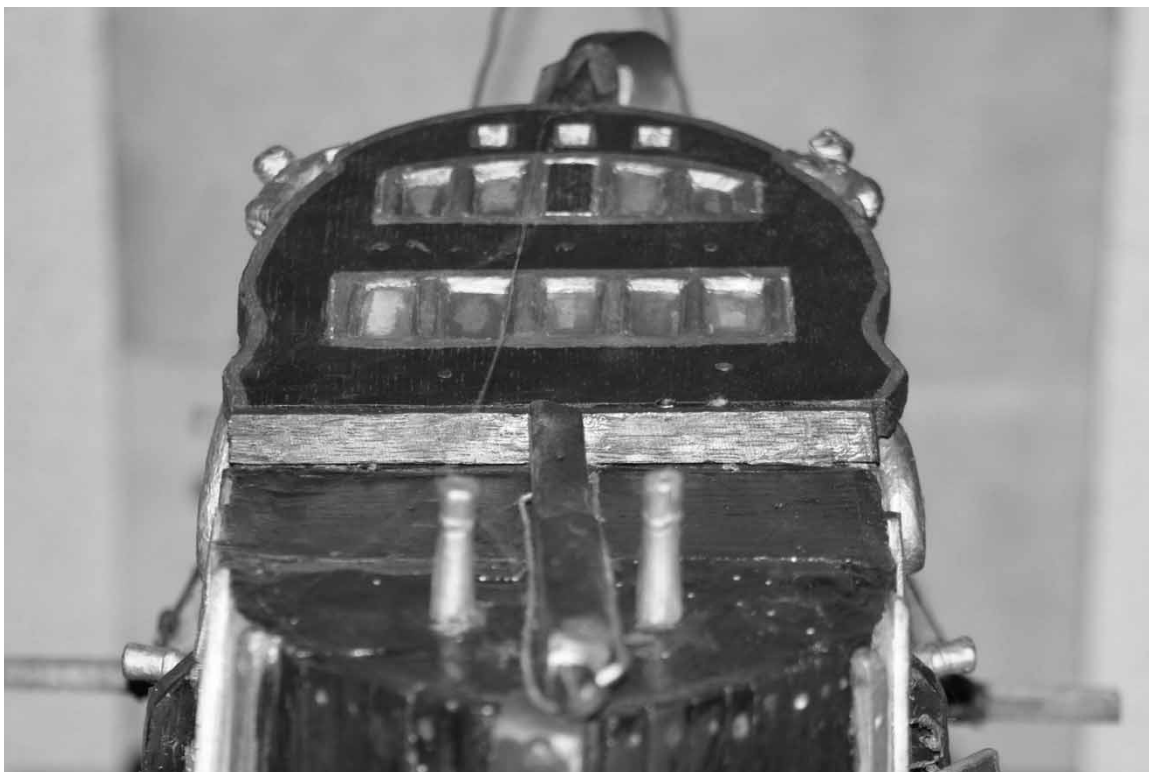
⁵⁰⁰ <https://canmore.org.uk/collection/1236772>



Detail of the stern and quarter galleries starboard side



Bow detail showing anchors and the St Andrews cross on a shield, the gilded lion behind the shield is not visible from below



Transom detail showing small lions lying on the top rail



Case Study 9: *St Ayle Parish Church, Anstruther and Cellardyke, Fife*

Denomination: Church of Scotland

Name: Families Pride KY399

Type: Fifie

Date of Build: c.1920

Builder: David Waters

Donor: Bill Batchelor

Length Overall mm: 1600

Breadth mm: 360

Height mm: 1180

Material: wood, paint, cotton cloth, cotton thread and metal fittings

Construction: Plank on Frame

Description: Hull is painted dark red below a white waterline and black above. The name *Families Pride* is written in yellow paint at the bow and repeated aft. The fishing registry number KY399 is illuminated in white paint at the bow.

Masts, Yards & Booms: bare wood

Rigging: Full rigged with cream cotton sails

Flags: None

Location: on a wooden stand on a side table against the north wall to the left of the dais and communion table.

The model was built by the donor's step-grandfather after the First World War for model boat sailing. The 1922 *Mariner's Almanac* lists *KY399 Families Pride* as a sailing boat registered to Crail owned by George Grubb.⁵⁰¹ The model was restored by Alan Whitfield of the Scottish Fisheries Museum sometime around 2003 and given to the church at that time.

Correspondence with church elder, and the model's donor, Bill Batchelor, January 2019:

'A model Fifie fishing boat, 'Family's Pride', just over 1 metre long, two-masted with bowsprit, lug sails and jib, designed for model sailing, built with a leaden keel of extended depth.

Originally built by my step-grandfather, David Waters of St Andrews, just after the Great War, from orange boxes, she was extensively rebuilt by Alan Whitfield, a model-maker who works for the Scottish Fisheries Museum in Anstruther, just over 15 years ago.

Vessels of the Fifie design were used extensively at the end of the 19th century and the start of the 20th for the herring fishery. Given to church on understanding that if no longer wanted for display, she will be handed over to the Scottish Fisheries Museum, in Anstruther.

She was given to church after it [the model] was refurbished. I got for Christmas in 1947, I think. The hull lay in my attic for many years until my son [about 14 at the time] decided he'd re-deck her as the wood was rotten - but he couldn't. I was very involved with the SFM for many years and knew Alan W quite well - so decided to ask him to re-build her. Originally in the vestibule, she was transferred permanently into the church when the latter was re-furbished, during Arthur's⁵⁰² ministry here. He had previously started having her on the table for funerals of folk with fishing connections.'

⁵⁰¹ *The Mariner's Almanac and Tide Tables*, 1922, p.463.

⁵⁰² Arthur Christie was minister at Anstruther & Cellardyke Church, 2009-2018.



St Ayle Parish Church, with the Fifie model on the left and the yacht model to the right of the main dais.



Case Study 10: *St Ayle Parish Church, Anstruther and Cellardyke, Fife*

Denomination: Church of Scotland

Name: AC 52 REV

Type: Sailing Yacht

Date of Build: Unknown/Donated 2018

Builder: Unknown - mass produced

Donor: Rev. Arthur Christie

Length Overall mm: 740

Breadth mm: 140

Height mm: 980

Material: wood, paint, cotton cloth, cotton thread and metal fittings

Construction: Block built

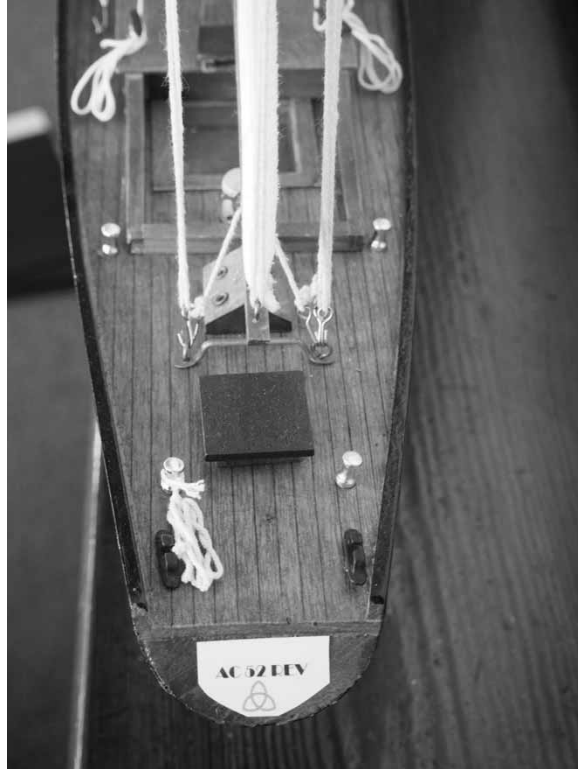
Description: Hull is painted black above a white waterline, and painted copper below. A printed paper name plate has been stuck to the stern, reading *AC 52 REV*. The mast and boom are bare wood.

Rigging: Fully rigged with white cotton sails

Flags: None

Location: To the right of the main dais, on a wooden base held in place by a brass support.

The model is mass produced and widely available at home decor shops. This model has been customised with a printed sign, *AC 52 REV*, pasted on the stern, a reference to Reverend Arthur Christie, who was minister at the church for eight years and retired in January 2018. AC 52 REV was also the minister's personalised car registration number.



Stern of the model yacht, dedicated to Rev. Arthur Christie, retired minister at St Ayle Church



Case Study 11: *St Monans Parish Church, Fife*

Denomination: Church of Scotland

Name: Mars

Type: 120 gun 1st Rate RN Frigate

Date of Build: c.1805-1810

Builder: William Marr

Donor: William Marr

Length Overall mm: 1600

Breadth mm: 600

Height mm: 1300

Material: wood, paint, cotton cloth, cotton thread and metal fittings

Construction: Block built

Description: Hull is painted dark red below the gun decks, the gun decks are black and yellow/gold in the style of Nelson's Navy colours. Two small boats, white with red gunwales, hang either side of the poop deck, and one pinnace sits on the main deck. Entry port is indicated at the middle deck both port and starboard. Quarter galleries are indicated, possibly in gesso. The figurehead is a full-figure male wearing early-nineteenth century uniform of white stockings, knee-length black breeches, dark red jacket and red soft hat. A

gilded wreath is wrapped around in a figure-of-eight shape creating the appearance of a gilded crossed garland on the chest.

Transom: Brightly painted in red and turquoise, with gilded highlights. Two rows of stern windows are picked out in black and white. The taffrail has two female figures holding a garland against a turquoise ground. Four stern guns are shown below the windows.

Masts, Spars & Yards: Lower masts and bowsprit bare wood, tops and top masts black. Yards are painted black.

Rigging: fully rigged, no sails.

Flags: Remains of small cloth flags on fore, main and mizzen masts.

Location: Hanging by wires at bow and stern in the south transept at the crossing, parallel to the steam drifter model, see *Pursuit*. Both models hang with bows towards the east, away from the communion table and pulpit below.

The church at St Monans, sometimes referred to as St Monance, has been on the site since the chapel of 1307 was replaced in 1362⁵⁰³ and renovated several times, including extensively in 1828. The church is very close to the sea, and to access it visitors on foot cross a small beck. The coastal footpath passes between the churchyard wall and the rocky beach. The model is said to have been made and donated by William Marr, a local sailor. It is said to be based on HMS *Mars*, on which the modeller served on during the battle of Trafalgar. The model was removed from the church during renovations in 1827/28 and was subsequently bought by a number of artists; Samuel Bough, RSA (1822-1878), William Fleming Vallance RSA (1827-1904) and then John Lorimer, (1856-1936) who returned the model to the church in 1905.

The kirk session minutes for the church between 1800 and 1828 do not mention the donation of the model, or William Marr, however, there is an Ordinary Seaman William Marr, aged 20 from Dundee, listed in the Trafalgar Roll⁵⁰⁴ serving on board HMS *Swiftsure* in October 1804. An extract from a letter by the Session Clerk

⁵⁰³ "Canmore Website National Record of the Historic Environment." <https://canmore.org.uk/site/3420>

⁵⁰⁴ The National Archives, "Trafalgar Ancestors." Catalogue reference: ADM 36/16549. Accessed: 11/05/2015.

who was present when the model was re-hung in the church in 1905, who was also the brother of the man who restored the model, gives the following origin story, variations of which are reproduced in multiple histories of the church:

‘Unfortunately, there are no records of how the model ship came to be in the church. There is, however, a legend which gives the following story:-

There was a Captain Marr who belonged to St Monance and he was captain of a naval frigate. During his captaincy he earned prize money which only came to him after his crew had been “paid off” and he was unable to trace them. This money which did not belong to him was used to have a model of his ship made and presented to his kirk. What we do know for certain is that the model was there before the kirk was restored in 1828 and that it was sold along with other timber, etc. at that time. The late Rev. Dr. Turnbull who was minister of the parish for over 50 years came to hear that the model was in the possession of an artist living in Edinburgh. Unfortunately, this artist would not sell the model back so Dr Turnbull waited until he died and got it from the artist’s widow. The model was brought back to St Monance in a rather dilapidated condition and my brother, the late Tom Miller restored it to its original condition when it was rehung in the church in 1905 and was unveiled by the oldest member of the church, Lucy Allison. I was present at that ceremony.’⁵⁰⁵

Curator of Ship Models at the National Maritime Museum, Greenwich, gave this assessment based on photographs sent to him by the Session Clerk in 1988:

‘The model in question is of a 120 gun 1st rate and bears a very close resemblance to HMS *Caledonia*, of which we have a model and would date the model at about 1810-20. Judging by the rigging, it looks as if the model is contemporary to the actual vessel...The model itself is sail-or made and the fittings and rigging have been fairly accurately reproduced. As is common with this type of model, the model maker would not be that familiar with the shape of the hull as he would the rigging, hence the inaccuracy of the bow. It is clearly too far forward of the foremast and the forefoot is the wrong shape.’⁵⁰⁶

There is no evidence to suggest that William Marr was a captain, or that the model is intended to represent HMS *Mars*, however, there was a Lieutenant James Black (1775-

⁵⁰⁵ Copy of a letter written by the late William Miller OBE, JP, Session Clerk at St Monans Parish Church, to F. K. S. Partridge, Art Research Editor Publishing Projects, The Reader’s Digest, 27th October 1972, reproduced with permission of St Monans Parish Church.

⁵⁰⁶ Copy of a letter from S. Stephens, Department of Ships and Antiquities, National Maritime Museum, Greenwich, to Mr I A Reekie, 8th February 1988, reproduced with permission of St Monans Parish Church.

1835 later became a Royal Navy captain) who served aboard HMS *Mars* and is listed in the Trafalgar Roll.⁵⁰⁷ Captain James Black, from nearby Anstruther, had a brother who was also in the Royal Navy, Rear Admiral William Black. A memorial plaque in Easter Anstruther Parish Church is dedicated 'in memory of Rear Admiral William Black, a distinguished native and benefactor of the parish'⁵⁰⁸ and it is possible that the model of HMS *Mars* is intended as a memorial to his brother James. It seems likely that the stories of William Marr and James Black have become conflated over time, and the truth lies somewhere in the picking apart of their separate biographies.

Other References

'The calling of most of the worshippers was fitly represented by "a small old-fashioned model of a ship, in full rigging, hung from the roof like a chandelier."' ⁵⁰⁹

Fleming, 1886

'Full rigged war ship with 52 guns aside suspended in the church, in the arch of the south transept at the crossing'⁵¹⁰

Kirk Session Minute Book, inventory 1939

'Fife has another model, which hangs in the quaint old kirk of St Monance, founded by King David II in 1362, not the least remarkable feature of which is that it was once "lost" for three-quarters of a century. The ship – a model of a line-of-battle ship of Nelson's day – is said to have been made and gifted by William Marr, a local seaman who had fought at Trafalgar on board HMS *Mars*, under the command of the famous Anstruther sailor, Admiral Sir James Black. The model is generally called the "Mars ship," which may serve to combine two suggestions, that it is a replica of the *Mars* and that it was a man named Marr who made it. When the historic church was undergoing large-scale renovation in 1827, the Fishermen's Loft was removed, and with it the old ship, which was bought by a local joiner for "an old song." Subsequently, it was acquired by two of the many artists who frequented St Monance,

⁵⁰⁷ Archives, "Trafalgar Ancestors." Catalogue reference: ADM 36/16262. Accessed: 11/05/2015.

⁵⁰⁸ Fleming, "Guide to the East Neuk of Fife. Embracing all the towns and villages, antiquities and places of interest between Fifeness and Leven, etc. [With plates and a map.]" Part I, p.52.

⁵⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, Part II, p.10.

⁵¹⁰ Church of Scotland, St Monans/St Monance Old Kirk Session, Minutes, 1872-1939, Records of Church of Scotland synods, presbyteries and kirk sessions, CH2/1056/9, p.295.

Sam Bough, RSA, and W F Valance, RSA. After reposing for many years in Mr Valance's studio at 47 Great King Street, Edinburgh, following his death it was acquired by another noted artist, John Lorimer RSA, of Kellie Castle, Pittenweem. Mr Lorimer had the model renovated and restored to its place in St Monance Kirk, from which it had been missing for seventy-eight years. The restoration took place just forty-six years ago; and many years later the Dundee artist, the late Mr James Patrick, showed me a relic of this occasion which he possessed – a bill printed with the following announcement: "St Monance Church, Sunday March 12th, 1905. The old ship, removed from the church 78 years ago, has been found and will be unveiled at the afternoon service." The unveiling ceremony was performed by the oldest inhabitant of the town,

Miss Lucy Allison.⁵¹¹ - James D Leslie, 1951

'The frigate of one hundred and thirty guns was presented in 1805 by Captain William Marr, a native son of the village. It was paid for by prize money from a captured French vessel and was a model of his own ship. That same year, Captain Marr fought at the Battle of Trafalgar, under one of Nelson's admirals, Sir James Black of Anstruther. However, the warship Mars of that encounter had only seventy guns. The records for the kirk session for 5th February 1905 state: 'Old ship: The Mars, suspended in front of the Sailor's Loft for generations, was bought by Mr J R Lorimer, Fellow of the Royal Society of Architects, of Kellie Castle, from the widow of Mr W F Vallance, RSA, Edinburgh, presented to the church and moved to the South Transept.' Again, it may have been stolen during the renovation. It was ceremoniously unveiled, on 12th March 1905, by Mr Thomas Miller, the boatbuilder who restored it, and Miss Lucy Allison, a washer-woman at the public wash-house at Burnside. Willie Miller tells that when the sheet covering the ship was removed, it floated gently down and totally enveloped Lucy, resplendent in her mutch! Tradition has it that the minister of the day, the Reverend Dr John Turnbull, collected the vessel from Edinburgh. Returning from the railway station to his manse at Abercrombie in the dark, he discovered that a small flag or pennant had fallen off and been lost. Diligently, he re-traced his steps in daylight, persevering in his search until the flag was found...In more recent years the ship has again been restored by an elder of the kirk, Mr Robert Ovenstone. The decks were painted red so that the blood of the injured and the dead would be less distressing to the seamen and marines still fighting.'⁵¹²

Fyall, 1999

⁵¹¹ Leslie, "Ship in the Kirk," p.44.

⁵¹² Fyall, *St Monans: history customs and superstitions*.



St

Monans Church is the closest church to the sea in Scotland



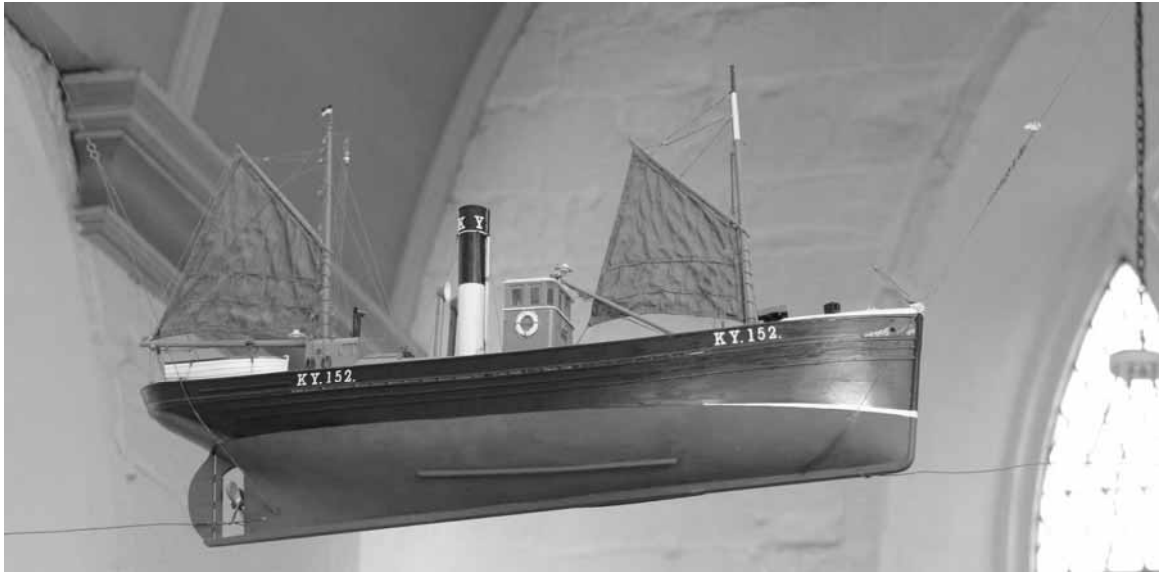
HMS *Mars* and the steam drifter hang parallel either side of the main dais.



Stern view of HMS *Mars* from below



HMS *Mars* bow view with figurehead



Case Study 12: *St Monans Parish Church, Fife*

Denomination: Church of Scotland

Name: Pursuit KY152

Type: Screw Steam Drifter

Date of Build: 1979

Builder: Alan Whitfield

Donor: Mr & Mrs Hamilton

Length Overall mm: 1200

Breadth mm: 290

Height mm: 600

Material: wood, paint, glass, cotton cloth, cotton thread, plastic and metal fittings

Construction: Plank on frame

Description: Hull is painted red below the waterline with white waterline indicated from bow to foremast, and black above. Funnel is white with black tops. Fishing registry number painted fore and aft in white highlighted in pale blue both port and starboard, also in white on the funnel. The name is painted in yellow gold at the bows, with a scroll decoration, and a thin blue line is painted running around the gunwales aft of the scroll. St Monance is written in white at the stern. The wheelhouse has glass windows and is painted brown with white roof, funnels are brown and white, aft deckhouse is also brown. There are life rings on the sides of the wheelhouse, and a white life boat on deck aft of the main mast.

Masts and Rigging: fully rigged, tan sails at both masts, with navigation lights. Both masts are painted brown with blue and white tops on the foremast.

Flags: A small black and white pennant is flying on the main mast

Location: Hanging from wires at bow and stern in the north transept, at the crossing, parallel to the HMS *Mars* model, see *Mars*. Both models hang with bows towards the east, away from the communion table and pulpit below.

The original wood-hulled screw steamer, *Pursuit*, was built at St Monance 1907, Official Number 125253, registered Kirkcaldy, owner James Wood, St Monance. Requisitioned during the First World War, it was sunk off Penzance. The model was bought by the minister and presented to the Auld Kirk from a donation by Mr & Mrs Hamilton of West Shore. It was consecrated and hung in the north aisle, circa 1991.

Email correspondence

‘The model was made in 1979 by our Technician (and model maker) Alan Whitfield. Alan modelled it on the boat owned by the Wood family of St Monans – he got the plans and details from John Wood who was working for Miller’s boatyard at the time. The boat itself was requisitioned by the Royal Navy and was sunk in the Adriatic in 1917. I attach a photo from our collection of the crew on board (John’s elder brother is the young lad at the front). The model was also on show in the museum for a time in the 1980s.

When Alan came to sell the model in the 1990s, he took it to the antique shop in Elie (who sold all his models for him). His story is that the model was barely in the shop window before the Minister of St Monans Kirk arrived and asked to buy it. He had received a donation to be spent on “something to enhance the church” and he chose the model. This was agreed by the Kirk Session and the model was duly installed.’⁵¹³

Details from the model maker about construction:

‘The model was built plank on frame and was coated in car body paste and then rubbed down giving a hard, smooth finish. The sails are cotton (made from an old shirt). The metal fittings were all hand-made. There is a brass engraved maker’s plate on the front of the wheelhouse. The globes of the carbide lamps fitted to the wheelhouse were made from

⁵¹³ L. Fitzpatrick, Curator, Scottish Fisheries Museum, Anstruther, *RE: Standfast Steam Drifter Model* [Email]. Message sent to M. Greiling (m.greiling@nms.ac.uk), 31 January 2019, 14:47:09.

the transparent plastic body of a biro pen cut and melted to shape. The model was initially built to be operational and was to be fitted with a steam engine. However, when Alan fitted it, it was so heavy it was impractical to use in this way so became a display model. The plans came from Model Boat Magazine – at that time only plans for an English steam drifter were available so it was based on that (the English boats were wider at the shoulder than Scottish ones) but painted and modified to represent the *Pursuit* KY152'.⁵¹⁴



The crew of the steam drifter *Pursuit* KY152⁵¹⁵

⁵¹⁴ L. Fitzpatrick, Curator, Scottish Fisheries Museum, Anstruther, *RE: Standfast Steam Drifter Model* [Email]. Message sent to M. Greiling (m.greiling@nms.ac.uk) 26 February 2019, 14:06.

⁵¹⁵ Copyright Scottish Fisheries Museum, reproduced with permission.



Pursuit, the hull was coated with car body paste to give a smooth, waterproof finish



Case Study 13: *Upper Largo Parish Church, Fife*

Denomination: Church of Scotland

Name: Yellow Caravel

Type: 15th century sailing warship

Date of Build: 1969

Builder: Dan Marshall

Donor: Dan Marshall

Length Overall mm: 1000

Breadth mm: 250

Height mm: 960

Material: wood, paint, cotton thread and metal fittings

Construction: Block built with built up topside

Description: Hull is painted black below the waterline and yellow and blue above. The stern castle and forecastles are both built up in the style of the fifteenth century warship, painted yellow, blue and red stripes with shields depicting the Scot-

tish red lion rampant, the saltire and one bearing the oak tree family crest of Sir Andrew Wood. A saltire is also picked out in blue lines on the lugsail at the foremast and in decorations around the crows-nest on the main mast. Two yellow metal carronades are on each side of the main deck.

Transom: painted blue, yellow and red stripes with two Scottish lion shields and a central saltire shield.

Masts and Spars: painted yellow with blue bands.

Rigging: fully rigged with sails set. Main sail is painted with two images of ships carrying saltires and a large oak tree, the family crest of Sir Andrew Wood.

Flags: Large tin saltires fly at the bow, stern and mainmast.

Location: On a stand on a side table against the wall to the right of the main dais.

The kirk at Largo is predominantly seventeenth century in construction, however, there has been a Christian settlement there since at least the ninth century. The tiny village has several claims to fame in Scottish history; the ninth century Largo Stone; the birthplace of Alexander Selkirk, the inspiration for Daniel Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe*, and home to 'Scotland's Nelson'⁵¹⁶ Sir Andrew Wood. Wood, a merchant-trader, rose to eminence becoming admiral of the Scottish navy to King James III. Due to his heroic defeat of the English fleet at Dunbar in 1489, taking on and capturing five of King Henry VII's ships with just two of his own armed merchantmen; the *Flower* and the *Yellow Caravel*, Wood was rewarded by being made Knight of Largo by King James IV.⁵¹⁷

The model of Wood's ship *Yellow Caravel* was presented to the church during a televised BBC morning service 3rd August 1969.⁵¹⁸ It is based on one at the Royal Museum of Scotland collection in Edinburgh.⁵¹⁹

⁵¹⁶ Grant, "A Memoir of Sir Andrew Wood of Largo, Captain of the 'Yellow Caravel,' and Admiral to King James III," p.210.

⁵¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p.209.

⁵¹⁸ Lawrie, *Largo and Newburn Parish Church; History of Largo Kirk*.

⁵¹⁹ RSM TY1926.17.



The small model of *Yellow Caravel* can be seen to the right of the main dais



Case Study 14: *Kinghorn Parish Church, Fife*

Denomination: Church of Scotland

Name: Unicorn

Type: 46-gun Sailing warship

Date of Build: Unknown

Builder: Unknown

Donor: Unknown

Length Overall mm: 780

Breadth mm: 360

Height mm: 740

Material: wood, paint, canvas, cotton thread, gesso and metal fittings

Construction: Block built with built up topside

Description: Hull is painted red below the waterline and black, yellow and red above. The figurehead is the gilded bust of a unicorn supported by a lion. The gun ports are black with white lids, guns black with red tips. Gunwales, bows and quarter galleries are highlighted in gold paint. The figurehead, stern and quarter galleries are likely to be sculpted in gesso.

Transom: Gilded saltire on the tafferel supported by two serpents. Gilded full-length figures wearing hats stand either side of the stern, on a rope work carved edging. Two stern guns are below, painted black and red.

Masts and Spars: painted brown

Rigging: Fully rigged with sails set on fore, main and mizzen masts, furled at spritsail and lateen. The sails on the fore, main and mizzen masts appear to be canvas stiffened with white paint.

Flags: Flying saltires on fore, main and mizzen masts

Location: Hanging from the ceiling above the screen to the Sailor's Aisle, in a perspex box, bow towards the main dais and pulpit below.

The model is purported to have been built in 1567 of a Scottish flagship *Unicorn*, which had been captured by the English in 1544. However, the lack of raised forecastle, stern- and quarter-castles (as seen in the replica of the *Yellow Caravel* at Largo) as well as the curved shape of the bow rather than the straight beak-head typical of this period, and the narrow shape of the stern, all suggest that this model was more likely to have been made in the mid-seventeenth century. When compared to the Danish model from Leith Trinity Church, which has a known date of around 1590, the date of 1567 is not credible. The *Unicorn* model may have been presented to the kirk around 1643, which is more in keeping with the style of the vessel, and would still make it the second oldest church ship model in Scotland, and the oldest still in its original location. It could plausibly be intended to represent the ship built for King Charles I in 1634, a 46-gun second rate of that name.

The Sailor's Loft at Kinghorn Parish Church, precursor to the aisle, was decided upon in 1608 by 'the mariners, the most important incorporation in the burgh...to repair and tile the upper part of the South Aisle by building a loft. A stone at the apex of the exterior wall of the present Sailor's Aisle, dated 1609.'⁵²⁰ The Kirk Session Minutes of May 24th 1642 mentions the 'heightening of the 'Marrinry Loft'⁵²¹ and 'a dozen bronzes' (hanging lamps) to light the loft, and it is possible that the model was added

⁵²⁰ Kinghorn Parish Church, *A Short History of Kinghorn Parish Church of Scotland - The Auld Kirk by the Sea*.

⁵²¹ Records of Kinghorn Kirk Session, CH2/472/2/112.

at this time. The incorporation of Kinghorn's sailors met at the church during the week, and had their own entrance into the Sailor's Loft from the kirkyard so as to be able to leave to their ships when the tide dictated without disturbing the congregation.⁵²²

There are various suggestions about the possible model maker. The church's own published history pamphlet gives 'possibly constructed by French prisoners', whereas information from the National Museums of Scotland about ship models suggests:

'This mid 16th century model is of HMS *Unicorn*, a Scottish warship. The *Unicorn* was captured by the English navy and the crew held captive on the island of Inchkeith, near Kinghorn, Fife. The crew made the model while imprisoned.'⁵²³

There is, however, no archival evidence to support this theory.

The model was restored in 1894 by local lighthouse keeper, Henry Mercer,⁵²⁴ at the time that the new tower and chancel were added to the church. The Sailor's Aisle is now home to a bell and ship's badge from the light aircraft carrier, HMS *Unicorn*.¹⁹⁴², white ensign, as well as several photographs of ex-servicemen at reunions in the kirk.

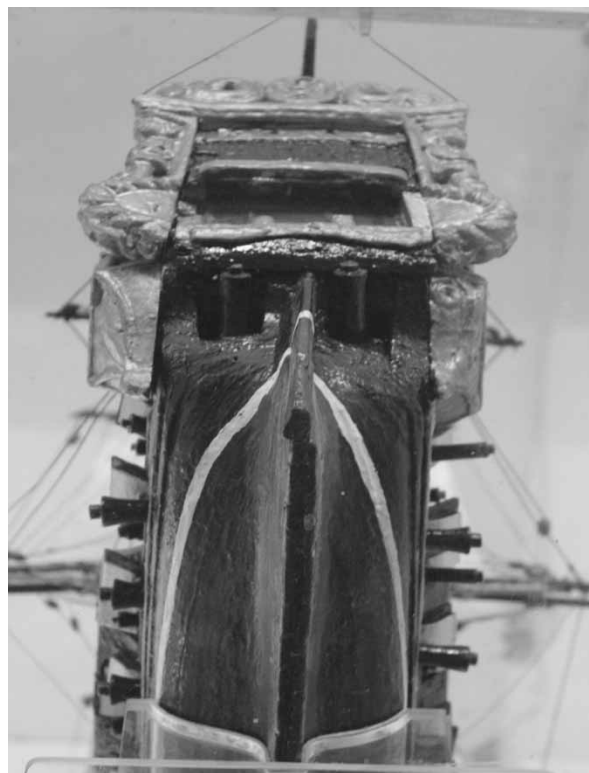
⁵²² Reid, *Kinghorn: A Notable Fifeshire Town*, p.32.

⁵²³ Text from museum inter-active.

⁵²⁴ Reid, *Kinghorn: A Notable Fifeshire Town*, p.32.



Saltire and sea-serpents can be seen on the taffarel



Detail of the rudder and stern guns



The model hangs above the screen between the Sailor's Aisle and the main body of the church



Case Study 15: *Kinghorn Parish Church, Fife*

Denomination: Church of Scotland

Name: Unknown

Type: Three-masted Sailing Warship

Date of Build: c.1970

Builder: George Atkinson

Donor: George Atkinson

Length Overall mm: 520

Breadth mm: 180

Height mm: 550

Material: wood, varnish, plastic, cotton thread and metal fittings

Construction: Plank on frame

Description: An entirely varnished wooden three-masted ship, with 16 guns. The ship is clearly not intended to represent an actual vessel; the hull shape has more in common with a Fife fishing boat than a ship of the line, but the guns, exaggerated box with lantern, the three small stern lanterns and the following plastic sails, have a crude charm.

Rigging: Rigged with sails made of stiff plastic

Flags: Hand-painted card pennants at fore and mizzen mast,
some indication that a similar pennant was originally present on the main mast also

Location: On a stand on a side table at the rear of the church, occasionally on windowsill

The model was presented to the church by local sailor, George Atkinson, who made models as a hobby.



Case Study 16: *Burntisland Parish Church, Fife*

Denomination: Church of Scotland

Name: Great Michael

Type: 16th century four-masted Carrack

Date of Build: 1962

Builder: Hamish Watson

Donor: Hamish Watson

Length Overall mm: 1400

Breadth mm: 370

Height mm: 1000

Material: wood, paint, canvas, cotton thread and metal fittings

Construction: Block built hull with built up topsides

Description: Hull is painted red with black stripes at waterline and below the lower gun deck. The large, over-hanging forecastle, quarter- and stern castles are built up in the style of a fifteenth century warship, and are brightly painted in buff, yellow, white, red and blue with a saltire pattern around the top gunwales. The quarter deck gunwales are decorated with shields with alternating saltire and thistle motifs. Guns are set at the main, quarter and poop decks. There is a crudely carved bird-shaped figurehead. A small brass

plaque with the maker's dedication to his father is attached to the hull port side midships.

Transom: Brightly painted in yellow, red, white and blue

Masts and Spars: bare wood

Rigging: Fully rigged with square sails set at fore and main masts, and lateen sails set at mizzen and bonaventure masts. Each of the square sails is painted with a different motif; the foremast has a saltire on a shield on the lower sail, and gilded cross above; the main mast has the Scottish Royal standard red lion rampant on a yellow shield on the lower sail, a gilded cross on the topmast and another royal standard on the topgallant above. The jib-boom has a crown at the mid point, and a smaller square sail below with a painted black and yellow royal standard.

Flags: Saltires on pennants fly at each mast with a flag of the Scottish Royal standard at the main mast. Two smaller saltires are present at the stern.

Location: Suspended from a chain in front of a pillar close to the Sailor's Loft and Prime Guild seating with their painted panels. The bow points away from the pulpit below.

Burntisland Parish Church, built in 1592, was one of the first to be built after the Reformation in Scotland, and is constructed in a square design with the central pulpit, box pews throughout, and lofts surrounding four pillars. A great deal of Christian symbolism is reflected in the construction of the church, in line with the modern reformed thinking, placing the hearing of the word as literally central to the church. In 1621 the Prime Gilt Society of Burntisland, the shipmasters and sailors, paid for the construction of a loft for their own use.

The seating arrangements for which had strict rules:

'That no person whatsoever be allowed to sit in the Masters Fore Seat, without first paying their entry thereto, and annually. 9. That no person sit in the Masters back seat (mates and carpenters and sailors excepted) without agreeing with the master of the house for the time...10. Sailors fore seat for mates and carpenters, and sailors of good repute in the place they paying annually for the said seats. The second and third seats for sailors and strangers.'⁵²⁵

Minute Book 13, Prime Gilt Society of Burntisland 1778

The model was presented to the church in 1962 as a replacement for one that was lost during the church renovations of 1822. It was made by a church member and gifted in memory of his father. The church's own publication on its history states:

'This ship encountered a severe storm in the River Forth and grounded. The crew received hospitality at the nearby church at Kirkton. In gratitude, a model of the ship was gifted to the Kirkton Church. Apparently the model was in the present church until about 1822, but with the extensive changes made in the church during this period, the model disappeared, so another model copied from the model of the 'Great Michael' in Edinburgh Museum was built by Mr Hamish Watson, Engineer and gifted to the church in 1962 in memory of his father, Henry Watson, an Elder and Treasurer of the Church ~1911'⁵²⁶

William Sweeney, 2014

A reference to an earlier model is also made in a history of Burntisland published in 1913:

'It has often been said that a model ship was suspended from the hook above the east gallery. Mrs Balingall told me her father, for 50 years Session-Clerk, often spoke of it. It was not the model now in the old Council Chamber.'⁵²⁷

Andrew Young, 1913

The reasons for selecting the Scottish flagship, *Great Michael*, are that ship's association with Fife and the local hero, Sir Andrew Wood (see also the *Yellow Caravel* model

⁵²⁵ National Records of Scotland, GD1/654/13, Prime Gilt Society of Burntisland Minute Book, 1778.

⁵²⁶ Sweeney, *A Guide to the Heritage and History of Burntisland Parish Church*, p.43.

⁵²⁷ Young, *History of Burntisland*, p.146.

at Largo). The Great Michael was said to have been built from "all the woods of Fife"⁵²⁸ under the direction of the Scottish admiral Wood.



The *Great Michael* model hangs level with the minister in the pulpit

⁵²⁸ Sweeney, *A Guide to the Heritage and History of Burntisland Parish Church*, p.42.



Case Study 17: *Tulliallan and Kincardine Parish Church, Fife*

Denomination: Church of Scotland

Name: William Gibb

Type: Three-masted Clipper Ship

Date of Build: c.1870

Builder: William Gibb

Donor: Colonel Alexander Mitchell

Length Overall mm: 1750

Breadth mm: 440

Height mm: 950

Material: wood, varnish, paint, cotton cloth, cotton thread and metal fittings

Construction: Block built

Description: Hull is painted copper below the waterline and black above with white stripe and black painted ports, typical of the clippers of the 1860s in the China trade. Stern has the named painted in gold paint on the tafferel, with a gilded line underneath and a row of six small painted windows. Figurehead is a full-length female figure in a long dress painted in white and pale blue. The topgallants on the main and mizzen masts are damaged.

Masts, Spars & Yards: Varnished wood

Rigging: Fully rigged without sails

Flags: Red ensign on spanker yard, and a house flag on the foremast, possibly a saltire over the letter G

Location: Hanging from wires centrally over the organ behind the communion table and pulpit. Seating for the Shipmasters Association and Shipowners Association in the gallery opposite and on a level with the model.

Restored: 1996 by Sandy Cousins C. Eng., F. I. Mar. E.

A model is recorded as being present in the old church, associated with Tulliallan Sailors Fund which had been incorporated since 1752.⁵²⁹ The model is referred to in a poem written by 'the sailor-poet of Tulliallan - Captain Robert Peter - on 17th August 1836 when his ship was at anchor off Settra Krou:

...Where now the Sailor's Loft where often came
those hardy men who plough the stormy main
where often times the home returned tar
would view these scenes he longed for from afar?
Where is the Ship which from the ceiling hung?'⁵³⁰

Capt. Peter, 1836

The old church was in a state of disrepair and considered too small for the burgeoning congregation, and so a new church was built a short distance away. The new church opened in 1833, apparently without the ship model. The present model was given by Col. Mitchell on the centenary of the new church in 1933.

⁵²⁹ National Records of Scotland, GD1/102, Tulliallan Sailors Fund.

⁵³⁰ Meiklejohn, *A Triad of Churches: The Three Churches of Tulliallan*, pp.19-20.

An information label at the church reads:

'The *William Gibb* model made about 1870 by William Gibb ship master and named after his father also a ship master. Four generations of Gibbs, all ship masters from Kincardine on Forth, span from about 1870 to the present day when Mr William Gibb of Largs commissioned the model restoration in 1996 by Sandy Cousins, C. Eng, F. I. Mar. E.'

Correspondence about the model appeared in The Scotsman newspaper, 16th October 1933:

A model of a clipper built ship six feet by three feet was hung in the Parish of Church of Tulliallan yesterday. The model used to hang in the Sailor's Loft in the old church, but when the new church was built a hundred years ago there was no Sailors' Loft and the ship was taken by its owners, the Sailors' Box Society, to the Commercial Hotel which they used as a club. Since then it has been housed in the lumber room. Through the offices of Colonel Mitchell it has now been re-rigged and hung behind the pulpit.

Further details from Tulliallan and Kincardine Church's own published history records the correspondence about the model's antecedents in 1933:

'Two days later a letter appeared in the same newspaper asserting that the ship was NOT the one which hung for many years above the Sailors' Loft in the former church but one which had been made by Captain William Gibb, a native of Kincardine, which he named the Wm Gibb after his Grandfather. A reply to this letter, published a few days later, asserted that one of the oldest inhabitants of Kincardine had to attend quarterly at a room in the Commercial Hotel to receive the handsome sum of 1/- from a military gentleman from Stirling Castle. The boy's father had been lost at sea and he was entitled to this Government Insurance money. He saw then, 75 years ago, the ship that hung in the Sailors' Loft hanging in the hotel. That boy and William Gibb grew up together and my old friend remembers that it was the talk of the town when Gibb took it in hand to re-rig the model. It was not then stated that he was trying his 'prentice hand at making a full sized model if my friend's memory is to be trusted, but several other old inhabitants corroborate him independently'. The writer goes on to say that the former letter does not account for the old model and asks, "Did Gibb destroy it – or use part of it to make a new one?" In answer to this challenge the writer of the first letter made these points:
that William Gibb made the model, which had been hung in Tulliallan Church on 15th October, during a space of calm weather at sea:
that it remained in his parents' house for some time but proved to be too cumbersome for the limited accommodation of their room:

that it was given into the custody of the Shipowners' and the shipmasters' Society for safe keeping and was hung in the large room of the Commercial Hotel.

'He adds that the model in the Sailors' Loft was probably that of a schooner or sloop of 60-120 tons which were the only type of ships belonging to the town at that time and that the style of the Wm Gibb proclaims her period – a clipper of the same style as the Cutty Sark. The evidence contained in the three letters indicates that the ship which was removed from the Sailors' Loft was to be seen in the Commercial Hotel as late as 1858: that William Gibb undertook to re-rig it and that the ship 'Wm Gibb' which he made when he was an apprentice at sea, was placed in the Commercial Hotel's large room and is the one which is now in Tulliallan Church.'⁵³¹



Bow view of the *William Gibb* model

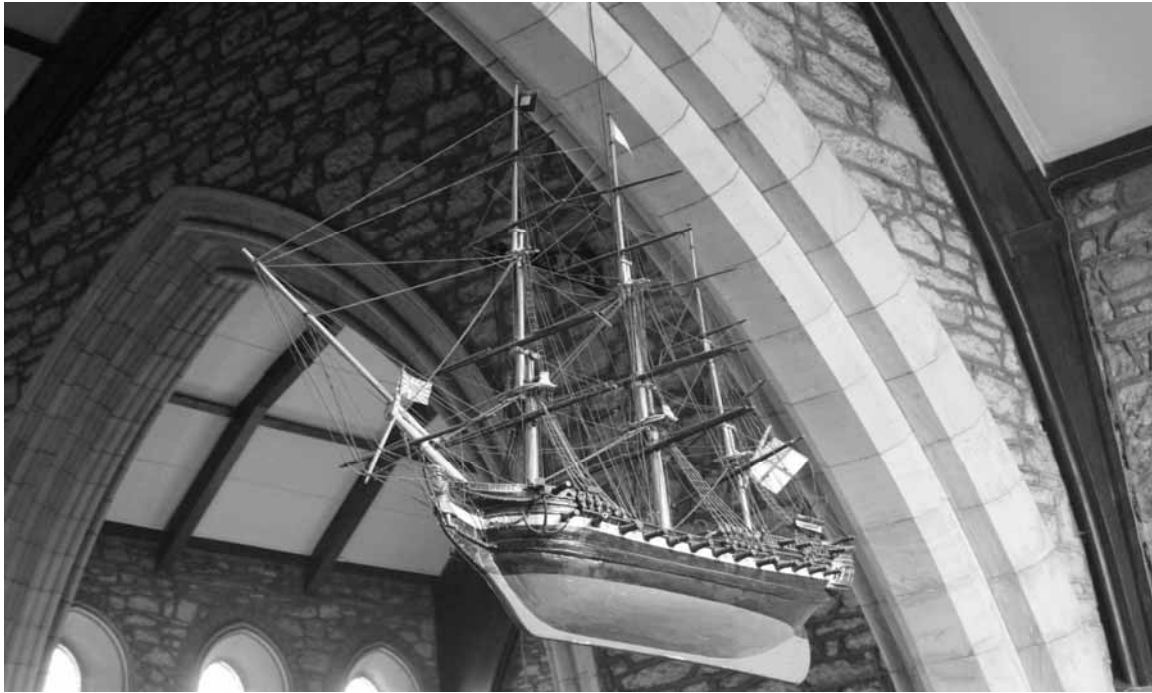
⁵³¹ Meiklejohn, *A Triad of Churches: The Three Churches of Tulliallan*, p.30-1.



The Ship Masters Association pews are indicated on the gallery opposite by a brass plaque



The model hangs in a prominent, central location



Case Study 18: *Bo'ness Old Kirk, Falkirk*

Denomination: Church of Scotland

Name: Muirhouse

Type: Three-masted 32gun Frigate

Date of Build: pre-1824

Builder: Unknown

Donor: Unknown

Length Overall mm: 1780

Breadth mm: 590

Height mm: 1380

Material: wood, paint, card, cotton thread and metal fittings

Construction: Block built with built up topside

Description: Hull is painted copper red below the waterline and black above with a white stripe at the gun deck. The guns are painted black with gilded tompions. The name is painted in black on a gold painted ground at bows, between the figurehead and the catheads, above the anchor. Gilded figurehead male full length, wearing kilt and bonnet. On board are fittings such as a green painted capstan, the wheel, ladders and two small boats. There appears to be a rolled up canvas, possibly sails, on the poop deck. The stern and quarter galleries are highlighted in gold paint with the name and date 1634 also in gold paint on the stern. Small

boats hang from davits port and starboard and at the stern.

Masts and Spars: painted white and black

Rigging: Fully rigged without sails

Flags: Possible painted on card or stiff paper; Union Jack on bowsprit, Blue Peter on foremast, white ensign at stern, pennant on main mast with name (and possibly cross of St George).

Location: Hanging by a chain above the Sea Box Society loft over the western transept

The church in Borrowstouness, also known as Bo'ness, on the southern shore of the Firth of Forth, has a long association with the 'ancient Friendly Society, the Bo'ness United General Sea Box.'⁵³² The first church was built there in 1638 almost entirely from subscriptions from the 'Skipperis and Mariners of Bo'ness'⁵³³ As Bo'ness grew into a larger port town through the seventeenth century, trading mainly with the Netherlands, the requirements for the church changed and the building underwent several renovations during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. It was finally considered too small and inadequate for the needs of the town and so a new church was built. The new church opened on Sunday 14th Oct. 1888. Some fittings from the old church were moved into the new building, including a sixteenth century Dutch pulpit.

The model was installed in the church by The United General Sea Box Society of Borrowstouness, also known as Bo'ness Sea Box Society. The kirk session minutes give an account of 'a meeting in the new kirk a meeting between Kirk Session representatives and representatives of Bo'ness Sea Box Society, Bo'ness Beneficent Society and the Anderson Trust, 8th March 1889 at the new church on Pan Braes to allocate seating.'⁵³⁴ The entire west gallery was 'to be allocated to the Sea Box'⁵³⁵

⁵³² Johnston, *The Records of an ancient Friendly Society: the Bo'ness United General Sea Box. Two centuries and a half of local history* [Reprinted from the *Falkirk Herald*].

⁵³³ Johnston, *The Records of an ancient Friendly Society: the Bo'ness United General Sea Box. Two centuries and a half of local history* [Reprinted from the *Falkirk Herald*], p.15.

⁵³⁴ National Records of Scotland, CH2/540/8 pp.359-362, Minute Book of Kirk-Session of Bo'ness.

⁵³⁵ *Ibid.*

The Sea Box was also granted the right to hang the model; 'with power also to the said society to erect and suspend (but that securely) and maintain in all time coming the model of the ship or vessel 'Muirhouse' from the roof of said West gallery but that always at the risk and expense of the said society, the responsibility of its being resting solely on the members of said Sea Box or society with entry occupation and possession to said pews from and after the term of Martinmas Eighteen Hundred and eighty nine to be the term of date of entry.'⁵³⁶ The name Muirhouse may refer to a hamlet close to Bo'ness where the Sea Box owned property.

The Sea Box was a wealthy and influential society in the town, founded as a benevolent organisation; 'from inception the Box was concerned with the charitable works, particularly interested in the presbyterian cause; building the church, paying the minister and the schoolmaster.'⁵³⁷

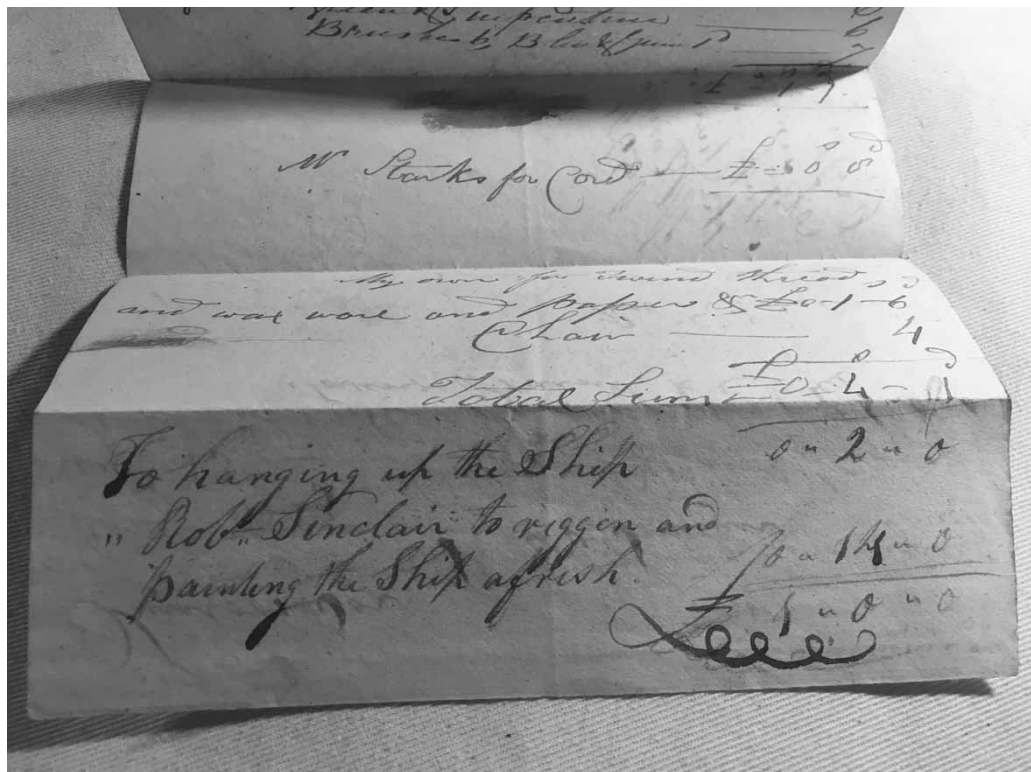
In the Bo'ness Sea Box Society records at Falkirk Archives is a receipt for payment: 'To Rigger, Painting the Ship afresh'⁵³⁸ paid to Robert Sinclair 13th August 1824, which suggests that the model had been in the possession of the Society for some period of time before that date. There is also a letter from the Scottish Exhibition of National History, Art and Industry, Glasgow 1911, dated 4th Nov. 1910 requesting to borrow the 'the little ship "Kenhouse" (?)'⁵³⁹ for display in an exhibition and requesting more details if so.

⁵³⁶ Minute Book of Kirk-Session of Bo'ness, CH2/540/8 p.396.

⁵³⁷ Johnston, *The Records of an ancient Friendly Society: the Bo'ness United General Sea Box. Two centuries and a half of local history* [Reprinted from the *Falkirk Herald*], p.46.

⁵³⁸ Falkirk Community Archives, A042.342, Bo'ness Sea Box Society Invoice To Rigger, Painting the Ship afresh.

⁵³⁹ Falkirk Community Archives, A042.496, Letter from Scottish Exhibition of National History, Art and Industry, Glasgow, 1910, Bo'ness Sea Box Society records.



Receipt for payment 'To hanging up the Ship' and 'to riggen and painting the Ship afresh' Robert Sinclair was paid 16 shillings in 1824



Stern view showing date and name; the date refers to the founding of the Sea Box Society in 1634

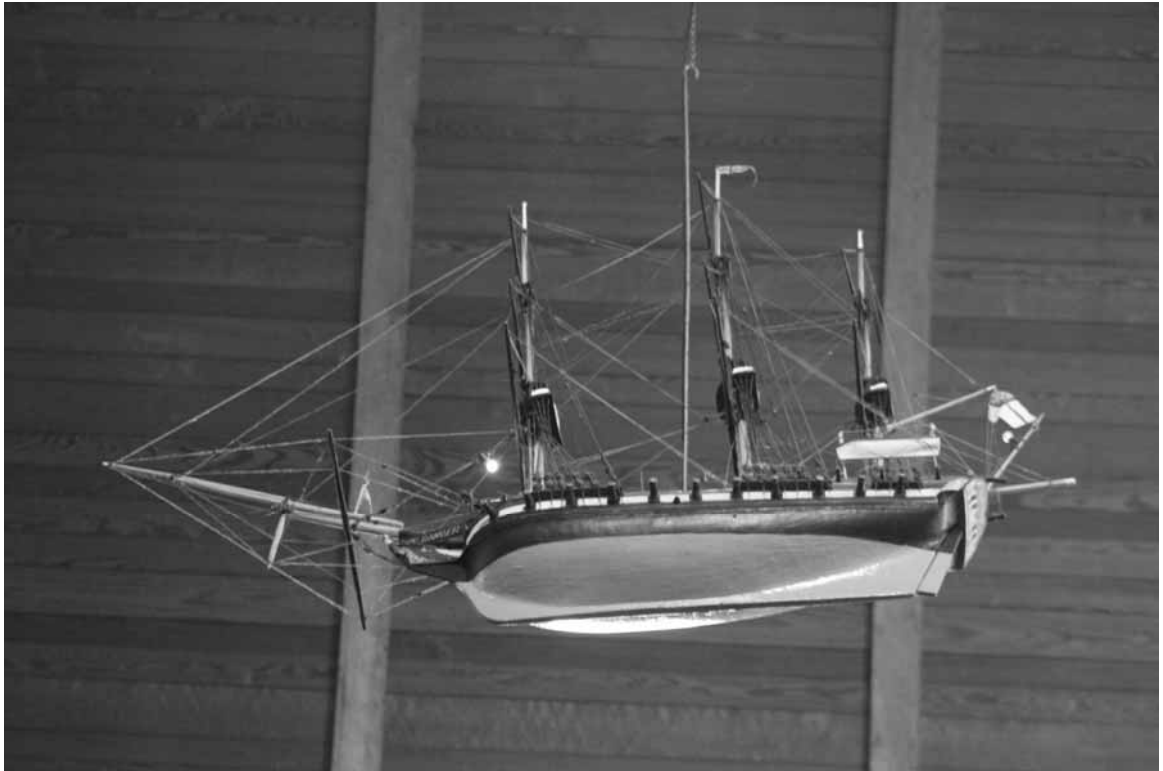


Port side quarter view showing figurehead



Bo'ness Sea Box Society, 1889⁵⁴⁰

⁵⁴⁰ Photograph from Falkirk Museums and Archives Collection, Accession No: P13237. Caption: Officials of Bo'ness Sea Box Society 1889, Twenty seven men pose for a photo around a model ship with a plaque (The United General Sea Box Society of Borrowstouness Instituted 1634). Photographer or Artist: Turnbull & Sons.



Case Study 19: *Carriden Parish Church, Falkirk*

Denomination: Church of Scotland

Name: Ranger

Type: Three-masted 26gun Sloop

Date of Build: pre-1908

Builder: Unknown

Donor: Unknown

Length Overall mm: 1700

Breadth mm: 450

Height mm: 1097

Material: wood, paint, cotton thread and metal fittings

Construction: Plank on Frame

Description: Hull is painted brown/gold below the waterline and black above with white gun deck. A saltire is painted on the transom and the stern galleries are detailed in white and yellow paint. Name *Ranger* painted port and starboard in gold paint at bow, and in white paint on the transom. Painted male figurehead, wearing a hat painted gold, red torso, blue breeches and yellow stockings. Small white boats hang from davits port and starboard.

Masts and Spars: painted yellow and black

Rigging: Fully rigged with no sails. Rigged with functioning electric lights in front of foremast and on spanker.

Flags: White ensign at stern, long pennant with cross of St George on main mast, Union Jack on bowsprit.

Location: Hanging from chain above the central aisle approximately halfway down the nave, bow heading east towards the communion table and chancel

Carriden, like its close neighbour Bo'ness, had a Seamen's Box from 'the mid-seventeenth century, but it became defunct after being badly run - defunct by 1856'⁵⁴¹ however, and no records from it survive.

The present Carriden Parish Church is a replacement for the smaller ruined church which was built in 1766 as the parish outgrew it. The new church was built in 1908 and opened in September 1909 with a 'procession from old church building to new church building for dedication service, minister, elders, choir and then congregation.'⁵⁴² No mention is made of the model in the kirk session minute books, however, it can be seen in a photograph dated circa 1910 held in the collections of Falkirk Community Trust Archives.⁵⁴³

The church's own publication about the history of the church has scant information about the model; 'the wooden sailing ship which hangs in the nave, "The Ranger", was also brought from the 1766 church, although little is known of its earlier history.'⁵⁴⁴

⁵⁴¹ Johnston, *The Records of an ancient Friendly Society: the Bo'ness United General Sea Box. Two centuries and a half of local history* [Reprinted from the *Falkirk Herald*], p.48.

⁵⁴² Minute Book of Kirk-Session of Carriden, 1869-1937, Records of Church of Scotland synods, presbyteries and kirk sessions, CH2/61/20, Falkirk Community Trust Archives, p.243.

⁵⁴³ Falkirk Community Trust Archives Accession No P20418 Caption Carriden Church interior, Carriden Brae. Date photo taken c.1910. Brief Description Church interior - the 'Ranger' ship model hanging from the ceiling.

⁵⁴⁴ G. A. Blackbourn, *Welcome to Carriden Parish Church!* (Carriden, Falkirk: Carriden Parish Church, no date).



Case Study 20: *South Leith Parish Church, Edinburgh*⁵⁴⁵

Denomination: Church of Scotland

Name: Unknown

Type: Danish 28 gun Galleon

Date of Build: c.1590

Builder: Unknown

Donor: Unknown

Length Overall mm: 645

Breadth mm: 290

Height mm: 650

Material: wood, paint, flax thread, linen

Construction: Block built

Description: Heavily carved and brightly painted in red, gold and white, the hull is white below the waterline. The bow is rounded with a straight beak-head decorated in red and gold, with black and white crosses on the lower beam and a reclining golden lion figurehead holding a red and gold shield. Dancing figures carrying musical instruments, mermaids, including two mermaids carrying tridents on the quarter galler-

⁵⁴⁵ Photograph copyright National Museums Scotland.

ies, and gilded crosses (possibly intended as St Andrew's crosses) are deeply carved around the gun deck, quarter galleries and stern. The monogram of King Christian IV of Denmark is carved on the taffrail and painted gold on a red ground, below are two figures in white and lower are two red lions rampant, possibly a reference to the Royal Standard of Scotland. The guns are half barrels painted black with red and gold painted caps, and there are two stern-chaser guns. The gun ports are framed with gold paint, and there are no port lids. The model is rigged with a bowsprit and three masts, the bowsprit has a spritsail topsail mast. Masts and spars are varnished wood with black tops and black yards with white tips, and tarred rigging.

Rigging: Fully rigged, no sails, re-rigged in the eighteenth century

Flags: None

Location: Original location in church unknown; currently on display in the Monarchy and Power display as part of the collection of the National Museum of Scotland, Edinburgh

Previously in the possession of Trinity House Leith, the model was bought at auction by National Museums Scotland in 1993.

It had been hung in South Leith Parish Church, where a former Minister was the Rev David Lindsay who married King James VI and Anne of Denmark in Norway in 1590.⁵⁴⁶ Trinity House Leith, was founded in 1380 as the Fraternity of Shipmasters and Mariners of Leith, later to become the Incorporation of Mariners and Shipmasters, as a charitable organisation for the care of 'old and decaying seamen'.⁵⁴⁷ The masters and mariners were a major contributor to South Leith Parish Church, having provided a quarter of the funds for its construction in 1483, having their own seating gallery, and having rights to select the minister. In the records of the kirk session, however, the masters and mariners are predominantly mentioned in relation to the upkeep of the church and their lofts and windows, and only occasionally in connection to the selec-

⁵⁴⁶ Correspondence with David S. Forsyth, Principal Curator, Medieval-Early Modern Collections, Department of Scottish History and Archaeology, National Museums Scotland, June 2015.

⁵⁴⁷ HES, *Trinity House Leith Statement of Significance*, Historic Environment Scotland (Edinburgh, 2005), p.4.

tion of ministers.⁵⁴⁸ The kirk's minister, David Lindsay was a prominent minister in the Reformed church in Scotland, a close friend of John Knox, he not only performed the marriage ceremony for King James VI and Anne of Denmark, but he also performed the coronation of the queen, and the baptism of Prince Charles in 1600.⁵⁴⁹ South Leith church had a special loft built for the king to use when he visited.

National Museum of Scotland Catalogue description:

The church-ship model has been part of the collections of Trinity House, Leith. It also merits inclusion in the best illustrated catalogue of early ship models. It is a remarkable and extremely vigorous piece of work. It dates to the early 17th century (or possibly late 16th) and bears a gilded version of the monogram of Christian IV of Denmark on the taffrail. The model is traditionally associated with James VI (the Danish King's brother in law) and a celebration of his safe return to Scotland in 1590 with his bride, Anne of Denmark. A further pertinent link between Denmark and Scotland is the presence of Scottish shipbuilders (Balfour and Sinclair) in Christian IV's shipyards. The style of the model is for its suspension (we assume within a church) so that the underwater part of the hull (nearest the viewer) is diminished in proportion and upper details such as carved work on the galleries, the guns and blocks are magnified. The ship is fully rigged and was re-rigged in the early 18th century, but we assume that details such as caps and top-sail sheet blocks which are conspicuous are accurate.⁵⁵⁰

However, other theories and identities for the model have been suggested at different times; including that it may represent the 'Danish warship *Haabet* (Hope)...built for the navy of King Christian IV of Denmark and Norway...the *Haabet* was part of a convoy bound for Spain but she failed to arrive and eventually returned to Copenhagen alone, having been storm damaged or attacked by pirates. It is possible that the *Habit* had put into Leith to be repaired and the master of the ship may have presented a model to

⁵⁴⁸ National Records of Scotland, CH2/716, Records of Edinburgh, South Leith Kirk Session, 1448-2010.

⁵⁴⁹ D. Robertson, *South Leith records compiled from the parish registers for the years 1588 to 1700; and from other original sources* (Edinburgh: A. Elliot, 1911), p.222.

⁵⁵⁰ Museum Royal Scottish and J. D. Storer, *Ship models in the Royal Scottish Museum, Edinburgh: a catalogue of models representing the history of shipping from 1500 BC to the present day* (Edinburgh: Royal [The Museum], 1985).

Trinity House as a token of gratitude for assistance.'⁵⁵¹ It was also previously identified as the French ship *La Belle Esperance*, see reference below.

Other References

'French Galleon, 1560'⁵⁵² Photograph included in E. Keble Chatterton's *Sailing Models Ancient and Modern*, 1934

'a model of a galleon *La Belle Esperance*, reputed to be the French ship in which Mary of Lorraine - mother of Mary Queen of Scots - came to Leith but which recent research made in Denmark reveals as a galleon of the Navy of King Christian IV, since the taff-rail beam bears the King's monogram.'⁵⁵³

Mason, 1957

'The next outstanding votive model that comes to our notice is one of a few years later, about 1590, and of Danish origin, bearing the monogram of King Christian IV. This model, of a three-masted galleon, is now in the Trinity House at Leith, with a replica in the nearby Royal Scottish Museum, Edinburgh. The hull is in an excellent state of preservation and full of detail, but, alas, some well-meaning enthusiast of the 18th century has re-rigged the model in the fashion of his own day, with many most incongruous and glaring anachronisms.'⁵⁵⁴

Robinson, 1970

A photograph from The Scotsman Newspaper archive shows the model in a glass case on the table in the Board Room at Trinity House, March 1983, with Captain David Archibald. The image can be accessed via the Historic Environment Scotland SCRAN website.

⁵⁵¹ Royal Scottish and Storer, *Ship models in the Royal Scottish Museum, Edinburgh: a catalogue of models representing the history of shipping from 1500 BC to the present day*, p.11.

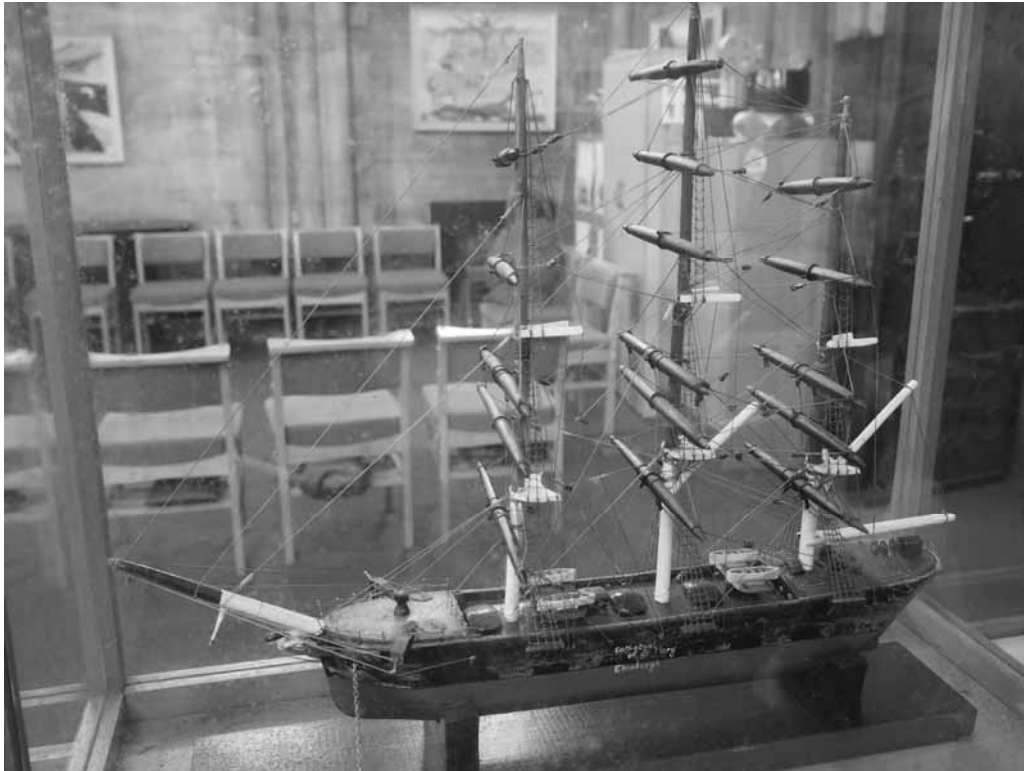
⁵⁵² Chatterton, *Sailing models ancient and modern*, Figure 20.

⁵⁵³ Mason, *The History of Trinity House of Leith*, p.181.

⁵⁵⁴ G. F. B. Robinson, "Art of the 'Votive' Model Maker," *Sea Breezes: The Magazine of Ships and the Sea*, April 1970.



Detail of stern decorations including the monogram of King Christian IV of Denmark, dancing figures, lions and mermaids



Case Study 21: *St Mary's Episcopal Cathedral, Edinburgh*

Denomination: Scottish Episcopal

Name: Ariel

Type: Three-masted Clipper Ship

Date of Build: c.1957

Builder: Sir Christopher Furness

Donor: Sir Christopher Furness

Length Overall mm: 570

Breadth mm: 160

Height mm: 450

Material: wood, paint, thread, metal fittings

Construction: Block built

Description: The hull is painted copper brown below the waterline and black above. The name Ariel is written in fold paint at the bows. Cathedral Church of St Mary Edinburgh is written in white paint port side midships. Lower masts, tops and bowsprit are painted white, upper spars are varnished wood and yards are black. Four small white boats are on the main deck. Figurehead is a female three-quarter length bust painted with dark hair and a gold painted dress.

Rigging: Fully rigged using red thread, no sails

Flags: None

Location: Originally in glass case on bracket against central pillar in the nave. Removed to vestry following damage, possibly after a failed attempt at theft, and subsequently not on display.

The model was presented to the church by Sir Christopher Furness, 2nd Baronet Furness (1900-1974) in 1957, possibly as a reminder of the church's Mission to Seamen.⁵⁵⁵ Sir Christopher Furness was grandson of the founder of the Furness Shipbuilding Company, and the Furness Withy firm of shipbuilders and shipowners.⁵⁵⁶ He had previously donated a model, not one of his own making, but a shipbuilder's model of the cargo vessel *Vale of Pickering*, built by Furness Shipbuilding Co., which Sir Christopher donated to York Minster in 1936.⁵⁵⁷ Furness served in the Royal Navy Volunteer Reserve during the Second World War as Lieutenant. He may also be associated with models at St Ebba's church, Eyemouth, through his wife who was a member there.

The *Ariel* model was displayed alongside a framed hand-written history of the original clipper ship *Ariel* and a description of the restoration work undertaken by Philip A Shand in 1979:

In restoring the model a few changes have been made, it is hoped without dissembling the charm of the original. The hull is carved from the solid and its regularity is a tribute to the original modeller, the lower part is painted copper: sheathing with copper was performed to prevent entry of wood boring organisms which caused rotting of the hull. The original deck fittings have been retained, but the ship's boats were missing and have been replaced. The masts are original, although they are constructed in one length without the characteristic doublings, they are too much an integral part of the character of the model to be replaced. The tops and spreaders have been replaced, they served as platforms and, as the name implies, to operate the stays which held the mast in position. The spars are original, but instead of six on each mast, one each has been removed from the fore and mizen. The topmast sail on the mainmast, the skysail or moonraker was rarely furled during a voyage. The rigging has been kept to a minimum, the shrouds with their

⁵⁵⁵ I. Morrison, Archivist, St Mary's Cathedral, Edinburgh, *Re. Ship Model at St Mary's* [Email]. Message sent to M. Greiling (m.greiling@2013.hull.ac.uk), 13/02/17, 17:17.

⁵⁵⁶ C. Mosley, *Burke's Peerage, baronetage & knightage, clan chiefs, Scottish feudal barons* 107th ed. (Stokesley: Burke's Peerage & Gentry, 2003), p.1498.

⁵⁵⁷ Harley, *Church Ships*.

ratlines, stays, braces, which moved the angles of the spars, topping lifts, upper topsail downhauls and course sheets and tacks are all represented. The catheads are too large, they carry the “whiskers” which act as spreaders for the jibstays and also the apparatus for holding the anchor prior to letting go, this is represented on the starboard side of the model. The model has been inscribed on the port side.

Philip A Shand 1979

Correspondence with the cathedral archivist could identify no records relating to the donation of the model: ‘I’ve had a good look through the Cathedral Chapter’s minute books, Provost’s Reports to Chapter and the Cathedral Board’s minute book for the years 1956, 1957 & 1958 and can find no mention of the *Ariel*. In 1957 the Master of Music had died suddenly, and the Provost resigned due to ill health, so these books are full of entries about appointing replacements.’⁵⁵⁸

The model can be seen in its original location in a photograph on the Historic Environment Scotland Canmore website: ‘Interior view from gallery of nave, crossing area with choir and apse ended chancel during Pentecost Sunday service 29/09/2003.’⁵⁵⁹

⁵⁵⁸ I. Morrison, Archivist, St Mary's Cathedral, Edinburgh, *Ariel* [Email]. Message sent to M. Greiling (M.Greiling@2013.hull.ac.uk), 09/03/2017, 16:34.

⁵⁵⁹ RCAHMS photograph, reference SC840278, Canmore Archaeology Notes, Historic Environment Scotland. <http://canmore.org.uk/collection/840278>



Clipper ship *Ariel* made by Sir Christopher Furness in its original glass case



Cathedral Church of St Mary Edinburgh, handwritten on hull



Case Study 22: *John Ker Memorial Church, Edinburgh*

Denomination: United Presbyterian Church

Name: Standfast WK191

Type: Steam Drifter

Date of Build: post-1953

Builder: J Bertram

Donor: J Bertram

Length Overall mm: 1300

Breadth mm: 250

Height mm: 700

Material: wood, paint, cotton cloth, thread, glass, metal fittings

Construction: Plank on frame

Description: The hull is painted brown below the waterline, with a blue and white waterline and green topsides. The wheelhouse is varnished wood and the masts and deckhouse are painted brown. There are life rings on either side of the wheelhouse and a lifeboat at the stern. The funnel is painted black with the fishing registry number in white. Vents are also black. The fishing registry number is also painted on the gunwales fore and aft and on the sail. Details on deck include fishing nets with weights, navigation lights, ropes and hatches.

Rigging: fully rigged with sail on mizzen mast

Flags: None

Location: Unknown location in church; currently in the collection of the Scottish Fisheries Museum, Anstruther

The model was presented to the church by Mr J Bertram, who made models as a hobby, in honour of the minister, Rev. C A Grant. The model is based on a model of the Anstruther boat *Violet* in what was formerly the Royal Scottish Museum collection, now National Museums Scotland.⁵⁶⁰

The information provided by the Scottish Fisheries Museum about the model indicates that it was made for use in Harvest Thanksgiving services. The name *Standfast* is a reference to the minister was Rev. C A Grant from Wick, as *Standfast* is the Grant clan motto, and the fishing registry number, WK191, indicates that this a Wick registered boat. The museum also notes that Rev. C A Grant was on active service as Chaplain in the first Gulf War at the age of 84. The model was given to the museum at Anstruther in 1979. The John Ker Memorial Parish Church, was built in 1883 as the Merchiston United Presbyterian Church, and named after the leading Scottish Presbyterian Rev John Ker (1819-1886) who had founded it as a preaching station. It was passed to the United Free Church, and then the Church of Scotland.⁵⁶¹ The church was closed in 1981 and demolished in 1984.

⁵⁶⁰ The model in the collections of the National Museums Scotland, *Violet* KY251 (T.1953.27). was made by P. A. Rumbelow of Great Yarmouth, scale 1:32. The original vessel was built in 1907 by W. Geddes of Portgordon, Morayshire, for Wm. Watson, Cellardyke.

⁵⁶¹ National Records of Scotland, CH3/1254, Edinburgh, Merchiston, United Presbyterian Church, John Ker Memorial United Free Church.



Deck fittings are complete with nets, liferings and ropes



Forward fish pens and bow view



Case Study 23: *Chalmers Memorial Church, Cockenzie & Port Seton*

Denomination: Church of Scotland

Name: Margaret Chalmers LH1905

Type: Fifie

Date of Build: 1905

Builder: William Hunnam

Donor: William Hunnam

Length Overall mm: 980

Breadth mm: 270

Height mm: 750

Material: wood, paint, cotton cloth, thread, metal fittings

Construction: Block built

Description: The hull is painted red below a white waterline and black above. The name *Margaret Chalmers* is painted in yellow at the bows followed by the fishing registry number in white. The fishing registry number is also painted on both sails. It is not possible to view the deck in situ; however, a church elder described the deck is complete with removable hatch covers.

Rigging: Fully rigged with sails on both masts; a dipping lug sail on an unstayed foremast, and a standing lug sail on the mizzen mast.

Flags: None

Location: On the cross beam above the main aisle in the nave of the church, positioned centrally above and in front of the communion table.

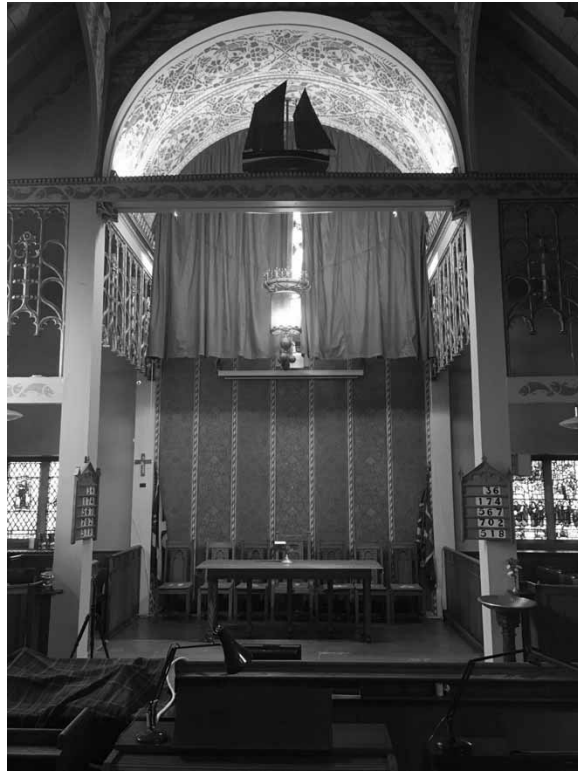
The model was made by local boatbuilder, William Hunnam, and was used to raised funds for the building of the new church, the congregation would leave donations in the hatches, and the model was then given to commemorate the opening of the new church in 1905. The church is dedicated to the Rev. Thomas Chalmers, one of the leaders of the Disruption of 1843. The model is named after his daughter, Margaret Chalmers, who was one of the major donors towards the new church, and who died three years before the building was completed. The fishing registry number is invented and represents the date of the church opening. The painted decoration inside the church incorporates a lot of maritime religious symbolism; fish, waves, scallop shells and windows depicting Jesus as the fisher of men. William Hunnam owned a boat-builder's shed close to the harbour at Port Seton and built a fishing boat named '*Day Spring*.'⁵⁶² Model restored by Gordon Jamieson, c.2007.

Other References

Historic Environment Scotland SCRAN website includes items relating to the sinking of the FV *The Brothers* in November 1890, with the loss of James, William and Thomas Hunnam off the coast of Yarmouth. These Hunnam brothers were the father and grandfathers of the William Hunnam who built the Margaret Chalmers model Fifie, and the Fifie model *Sunshine* at Cockenzie Old Parish Church.⁵⁶³

⁵⁶² Murphy, *Boatie Blest*, p.55.

⁵⁶³ Scotland's East Coast Fisheries project, Historic Environment Scotland SCRAN ID 000-000-574-289-C.



The Fifie model, *Margaret Chalmers*, is high above the communion table



Margaret Chalmers model, surrounded by sea birds, fish and waves, as viewed from the gallery



Case Study 24: *Cockenzie and Port Seton Old Parish Church*

Denomination: Church of Scotland

Name: Sunshine LH258

Type: Fifie

Date of Build: 2006

Builder: Thomas Hunnam

Donor: Thomas Hunnam

Length Overall mm: 870

Breadth mm: 210

Height mm: 740

Material: wood, paint, cotton cloth, thread, metal fittings

Construction: Plank on frame

Description: The hull is painted red below the white painted waterline, and black topsides with blue gunwales. The deck is also painted red, the masts and hatch rims are blue, the removable hatch covers are varnished wood. Details such as ropes, net winding gear and vents are included. The name is painted in white at the bows with the fishing registry number painted aft, and Port seton painted at the stern. The fishing registry number is also painted on the fore sail.

Rigging: fully rigged with tan sail on both masts; a dipping lug sail on the foremast, and a standing lug sail on the mizzen mast.

Flags: None

Location: On stand on windowsill

This model was made by the nephew of William Hunnam who made the Chalmer's Memorial Church model Fifie, and is almost identical to that model. The Hunnam family were boatbuilders and fishermen going back several generations in the area; Thomas and William being the son and grandson of a family of three brothers who were all drowned when their boat *The Brothers* was lost in a storm off Yarmouth fishing in 1890 (see entry 23 *Margaret Chalmers* case study). The Mariner's Almanac 1937 lists a Cockenzie motor fishing boat LH258 *Sunshine* owned by Mrs M Dickson & J Dickson Junior, 31-82 Tons.⁵⁶⁴ Given to Cockenzie and Port Seton Old Parish Church, the Auld Kirk, sometime after the 2008 3 Harbours Arts Festival Model Boat Show.⁵⁶⁵ The actual boat *Sunshine* belonged to Tommy Hunnam's uncle, their family boats were always called *Sunshine* or *Dayspring*.

Cockenzie and Port Seton Old Parish Church is the traditional home of The Friendly Society of Fishermen 1813 - 1973, the former members of which still meet to parade through the town with the Society's banners every five years. Copies of the original banners, plus a more modern banner are on display in the church.

The church is filled with items from fishing boats and relating to the historical connections to the inshore fishing industry: navigation lights are hung either side of the pulpit and a light above the pulpit represents the masthead light are lit for sermons, an anchor, propeller, helm wheel, carved fish, and life rings painted with the names of local fishing boats. The local boats often had names referencing biblical verses, such as *Scarlet Line*, and the life rings from these boats, painted with their names and fishing registry numbers are hung in front of the church windows.

On the wooden panelling against the wall to the left of the pulpit and communion table is a painting of a sailing vessel with a golden cross on the sail, and the word

⁵⁶⁴ *The Mariners' Almanac and Tide Tables*, 1937, p.497.

⁵⁶⁵ Murphy, *Boatie Blest*, pp.52-3.

Oikoumene, a Greek term meaning the whole inhabited world, and the symbol of the World Council of Churches, which was painted by the former minister Rev J L Smellie, (1956-1976). Rev. Smellie also painted a motor fishing boat passing the nearby power station superimposed with a crucifix which hangs in the vestry. Photos in the vestry of past ministers show that the accumulation of maritime artefacts only started in earnest in the ministry of Dr Knox 1980-1985 as a photograph shows that the navigation lights and steering wheel were installed during his time.



Case Study 25: *Cockenzie and Port Seton Old Parish Church*

Denomination: Church of Scotland

Name: Lily of the Valley LH360

Type: Motor ring-net fishing boat

Date of Build: post-1950

Builder: Unknown

Donor: Unknown

Length Overall mm: 1120

Breadth mm: N/A

Height mm: 590

Material: wood, paint, cotton cloth, thread, plastic and metal fittings

Construction: Solid block with uppers attached with furniture tacks and glue

Description: A two-dimensional wall hanging model with a bespoke stand. Painted red below a white waterline. Topsides are varnished wood with silver highlights on the gunwales and rubbing strakes and also the ring-net gear. The name has been printed on a plastic dymo label and stuck to a name-plate alongside the fishing registry number both fore and aft. A lifering is attached to the wheelhouse painted with the name, number and port of registry.

Rigging: Fully rigged with cream sail on mizzen mast

Flags: None

Location: On stand on side table on dais

Two-dimension wall hanging model of a motor ring-net fishing boat, made from wood. The original *Lily of the Valley* boat was owned locally by members of the church and is the type of vessel bought after the Second World War with money from the government to encourage the post-war fishing industry. A sailing Fifie named *Lily of the Valley* is also depicted in the new Friendly Society of Fishermen banner in the church.

For details of the church see Case Study 24 for *Sunshine*.



Case Study 26: *Cockenzie and Port Seton Old Parish Church*

Denomination: Church of Scotland

Name: Ugie Vale PD202

Type: Steam Drifter

Date of Build: 1994

Builder: P.A.H. (unknown)

Donor: Andrew Mack

Length Overall mm: 900

Breadth mm: 170

Height mm: 420

Material: Glass reinforced plastic, wood, paint, thread, plastic and metal fittings

Construction: Fibreglass hull

Description: The hull is painted orange below a white waterline with red above and green topsides. The deck is varnished wood. The wheelhouse is painted orange with a white roof, the funnel is buff with a black top and the fishing registry number in white. Deck fittings such as the net winding gear is painted in green and red. There is a lifeboat painted white and green aft.

Rigging: Fully rigged with a sail furled on the mizzen mast

Flags: None

Location: On stand on side table on dais

Ugievale listed in the 1937 Mariner's Almanac as owned by Arthur Buchan & others, 40 tons.⁵⁶⁶ The model was acquired by the donor from an Admiralty office and donated to the church. The model was most likely intended as an operational model, and is wired to allow for navigation lights to be lit.

Accompanying handwritten note reads:

'Ugie Vale is typical of the herring drifters in common use along the whole of the east coast immediately before and after World War 1. They were steam driven, wooden hulled vessels, the engines in many cases built by Elliott & Garood Ltd, Beccles. A considerable number of these boats were built at Chalmers' Yard at Oulton Broad. The model is built to a scale of 1:32 (3/8"=1ft) and is powered by a 6volt electric motor with a 3:1 reduction gearbox. Two channel radio is fitted to control steering and speed. *Ugie Vale* (a village near Peterhead) took 18months to built. P.A.H. 8.94'.

For details of the church see Case Study 24 for *Sunshine*.

⁵⁶⁶ *The Mariner's Almanac and Tide Tables*, 1937.



Case Study 27: *Cockenzie and Port Seton Old Parish Church*

Denomination: Church of Scotland

Name: Boston Typhoon FD272

Type: Steam Trawler

Date of Build: c.1991

Builder: Bob Scott

Donor: Bob Scott

Length Overall mm: 1430

Breadth mm: 270

Height mm: 660

Material: Glass reinforced plastic, wood, paint, thread, plastic and metal fittings

Construction: Fibreglass kit

Description: Painted red and black below the waterline, and black above. The name and fishing number are painted at the bows and stern. The wheelhouse is orange and white, the funnel red with black top and the fishing number in white. Details include three white seagulls attached by wire to the mizzen mast to look as though they are circling the boat. Deck details include lifeboat, winches, rails, ladders, life rings, lights and hatches.

Rigging: Two masts rigged, no sails

Flags: Red ensign pennant at stern

Location: On stand on windowsill

Glass reinforced plastic (GRP) model possibly made from a kit from Mount Fleet Models.

This original *Boston Typhoon* is listed on Fleetwood trawlers: Official Number: 180335 Yard Number: 376 Completed: 1948 Gross Tonnage: 329 Net Tonnage: 128 Length: 137.5 ft Breadth: 25.6 ft Depth: 12.3 ft Engine: T.3-cyl AND BOILER by Amos & Smith Ltd, Hull (engine built 1945). Fitted for burning oil fuel, F.P. above 150 ° F History 25.5.1948: Launched by Richards Ironworks Ltd, Lowestoft. Owned by Boston Deep Sea Fisheries & Ice (DSF&I).⁵⁶⁷

A model boat exhibition has been held in the church hall every year since 2006 as part of the Three Harbours Festival, which replaced the annual harbour gala. This models came into the church after the model boat show sometime after 2008.⁵⁶⁸

For details of the church see Case Study 24 for Sunshine.

⁵⁶⁷ "The Bosun's Watch Fleetwood Steam and Sailing Trawlers," Fleetwood Maritime Heritage Trust. Accessed 01/12/2018. www.fleetwood-trawlers.info

⁵⁶⁸ Murphy, *Boatie Blest*, p.71.



Case Study 28: *Cockenzie and Port Seton Old Parish Church*

Denomination: Church of Scotland

Name: Lady M LT109

Type: Steam Drifter

Date of Build: 2000

Builder: Bob Scott

Donor: Bob Scott

Length Overall mm: 1100

Breadth mm: 270

Height mm: 530

Material: Glass reinforced plastic, wood, paint, cotton cloth, thread, plastic and metal fittings

Construction: Fibreglass kit

Description: Painted red below the waterline and black above, with the name and fishing registry number painted in white fore and aft. Deckhouse and wheelhouse are painted brown, the funnel is red and white with black top and the fishing registry number in white. Deck details include hatches, lifeboat aft, life rings on the deckhouse, winches, main mast lowered, lights, ladder, vents and derrick at bow.

Rigging: fully rigged with tan sail on mizzen mast

Flags: None

Location: On stand on windowsill

A framed notice alongside reads: Built by Mr Bob Scott and presented to Angus Hare to mark 25 years in the position of Sessions Clerk of Cockenzie & Port Seton Old Parish Church.

A model boat exhibition has been held in the church hall every year since 2006 as part of the Three Harbours Festival, which replaced the annual harbour gala. These models came into the church after the model boat show in 2007.⁵⁶⁹

For details of the church see Case Study 24 for *Sunshine*.

⁵⁶⁹ Murphy, *Boatie Blest*, p.73.



Case Study 29: *Cockenzie and Port Seton Old Parish Church*

Denomination: Church of Scotland

Name: Peggy PD149

Type: Steam Drifter

Date of Build: 1990

Builder: Bob Scott

Donor: Bob Scott

Length Overall mm: 1250

Breadth mm: 560

Height mm: 260

Material: Glass reinforced plastic, wood, paint, cotton cloth, thread, plastic and metal fittings

Construction: Fibreglass kit

Description: Painted red below the waterline and black above, with the name and fishing registry number painted in white fore and aft. Deckhouse and wheelhouse are painted brown, the funnel is black with a white band and the fishing registry number in white. Deck details include hatches, lifeboat aft, floats, life rings on the wheelhouse, winches, main mast lowered, lights, ladder, vents and derrick at bow. Two

white seagulls are attached by wire to main mast to appear as though they are circling the catch.

Rigging: Fully rigged with white sail on mizzen mast

Flags: None

Location: On stand on windowsill

The original boat *Peggy* was built by Hall, Russell & Company, Aberdeen for owner William Hay, Peterhead.

A framed notice alongside the model reads:

"The following information may be of interest to you with regards to this steam drifter model. The grandson of the original skipper and owner has given me a few details regarding this particular ship. He is John D (Dot) Duncan, now an elderly gentleman who one time sailed on the *Peggy* in his early days at sea. The *Peggy* was built by Hall Russell of Aberdeen, who also built the sister ship called *Jeannie* for the Duncan family of Peterhead, in 1907. There were 7 ships built to this particular design. During the First World War the *Peggy* was used as the Admiral's barge by the Admiralty. Thereafter it reverted to herring fishing. The *Peggy* was also used in the process of laying a cable from Peterhead to Russia, known locally as the "Russian Cable" for the British and Russian Governments. Just before the Second World War the *Peggy* left the Duncan family's ownership.'

A model boat exhibition has been held in the church hall every year since 2006 as part of the Three Harbours Festival, which replaced the annual harbour gala. These models came into the church after the model boat show in 2007.⁵⁷⁰

For details of the church see Case Study 24 for *Sunshine*.

⁵⁷⁰ Murphy, *Boatie Blest*, p.72.



Case Study 30: *St Ebba's Episcopal Church, Eyemouth*

Denomination: Scottish Episcopal

Name: Dayspring LH87

Type: Motor Fishing Boat

Date of Build: Unknown

Builder: Unknown

Donor: Unknown

Length Overall mm: 340

Breadth mm: 105

Height mm: 275

Material: wood, paint, cotton cloth, thread, glass, metal fittings

Construction: Plank on frame

Description: Painted in traditional east coast fishing colours; red below a white waterline, black above with a yellow line at the rubbing strake. The name is painted in yellow at the bows next to a small radiating sun motif, the fishing registry number is written fore and aft, and the port of registry, Port Seton, written at the stern. The rails are white and the inside of the gunwales are painted green, with red cleats. The deck, hatches, wheelhouse and masts are all varnished wood. Winding gear is painted green. There is glass in the

wheelhouse windows, and a white painted roof with a red and white life ring on either side. The name Dayspring is painted on the front of the wheelhouse.

Rigging: Rigged with sail on mizzen mast

Flags: None

Location: On stand on windowsill in the nave, north wall nearest the harbour and sea

This is a small model of a motor fishing boat with accompanying plaque which reads: 'Remember John Jamieson A Fisherman of Great Renown'.

The name *Dayspring* was used for boats owned by the Dickson family at Port Seton. Dayspring is a Biblical reference, coming from Luke Chapter 1, verses 76-79 'the Dayspring from on high hath visited us, to them that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death'.⁵⁷¹ The Dicksons were also related to Hunnam family at Cockenzie and Port Seton. In October 1939, following the first Luftwaffe attack on the United Kingdom, the Dayspring picked up the three surviving crew members from a shot-down German bomber. The crew gave the boat's skipper John Dickson Snr, a gold ring in gratitude. The boat also appears in a painting by the artist John Bellany (1942-2013).



The name *Dayspring* is written on the hull and the front of the wheelhouse

⁵⁷¹ *Holy Bible : New Revised Standard version: containing the Old and New Testaments with the Apocryphal/Deuterocanonical books.*



Case Study 31: *St Ebba's Episcopal Church, Eyemouth*

Denomination: Scottish Episcopal

Name: None

Type: Three-masted Ship

Date of Build: Unknown

Builder: Unknown

Donor: Unknown

Length Overall mm: 440

Breadth mm: 100

Height mm: 325

Material: wood, paint, cotton cloth, thread, metal fittings

Construction: Block built

Description: Lower hull painted red below a white waterline and black and white above. Rails and gunwales are painted white with masts and spars varnished wood, and yards wood with white tips. A gilded carving is at the bow for a figure-head. A small boat hangs at the stern.

Rigging: Rigged no sails

Flags: None

Location: On stand on windowsill in the nave, north wall nearest the harbour and sea

This model with its heavy yards and rough finish is reminiscent in style to the model of the clipper ship *Ariel*, in St Mary's Episcopal Cathedral, Edinburgh, made by Sir Christopher Furness. There are links to the establishment of St Ebba's church in 1884 with St Mary's Cathedral in Edinburgh as St Mary's is the mother church of the Diocese of Edinburgh to which St Ebba's belongs.

Another significant link with St Mary's Cathedral and St Ebba's church is that they were both supported and attended by Sir Christopher and Lady Flower Furness. The couple lived at nearby Netherbyres House, Eyemouth. Lady Furness was a church warden at St Ebba's for forty years and she and her husband donated a number of items to the church including the altar cross, two warden's wands and altar candlestick blocks.⁵⁷² After her husband's death in 1973 Lady Furness donated an organ to the church in his memory. Although there is no record to support the theory, it seems likely that the three-masted ship is another donation from Sir Christopher.



St Ebba's Church, Eyemouth, overlooks the harbour

⁵⁷² Col. S. Furness, *A History of St Ebba's Episcopal Church Eyemouth* (Eyemouth, 2010), pp.2-3.



Case Study 32: *St Ebba's Episcopal Church, Eyemouth*

Denomination: Scottish Episcopal

Name: None

Type: Single-masted Sail Fishing Boat

Date of Build: Unknown

Builder: Unknown

Donor: Unknown

Length Overall mm: 430

Breadth mm: 130

Height mm: 415

Material: wood, paint, cotton cloth, thread and metal fittings

Construction: Plank on frame

Description: Painted red below waterline, yellow and blue hull, with yellow sails. Rudder with tiller

Rigging: Rigged fore and aft Bermuda rigged with with sail on main mast boom and two triangular sails on the mast main forward to the bow and gunwales.

Flags: None

Location: On windowsill in the nave, north wall nearest the harbour and sea

Possibly made to look like a fishing boat from the Holy Land the model contains netting and soft toy fish, decorated with sequins, probably a later addition. It may have been used to demonstrate Sunday School Bible stories.



The three models decorate each windowsill nearest the harbour



Case Study 33: *St Nicholas Chapel, Glasgow Cathedral*

Denomination: Church of Scotland

Name: None

Type: Two-masted Brig

Date of Build: Unknown

Builder: Unknown

Donor: Stanley Gimson

Length Overall mm: 940

Breadth mm: 200

Height mm: 660

Material: wood, paint, cotton cloth, thread, metal fittings

Construction: Plank on frame

Description: Painted white below the waterline with black and dark stained varnish finish to topsides. Few details are discernible, however, photographs from the conservator who installed the model show deck hatches and a small boat stowed between the masts. The figurehead is gilded curved scrollwork. The transom is rounded with four stern gallery windows. There is a single quarter gallery window and six broadside guns.

Rigging: Fully rigged with sails set on fore and main masts

Flags: None

Location: Mounted by a bronze bracket about 6 metres from the floor on the south wall of the chapel. Installed in 2007 by Stephen Umpleby, Artefacts Conservation Services.

Bequeathed in 2004 by the last Sheriff Stanley Gimson and installed 2007 following consultation with Historic Environment Scotland who own and run the building and the Society of Friends to whom the model was gifted and who are an arm's length organisation from the kirk session.

Stanley Gimson (1915 - 2003) was born and educated in Glasgow. He became one of the leading lawyers in Scotland and chairman of several hospital boards. The Cathedral has a long relationship with both The Trades House and Merchants House, however, in the opinion of Glen Collie, Joint Session Clerk of the Cathedral, 'the only mercantile connection as far as the ship is concerned is that the person who donated it thought it would be appropriate.'⁵⁷³ The cathedral also houses many regimental colours as well as the flag for the Glasgow 602 RAF squadron and the bell from HMS *Glasgow*.

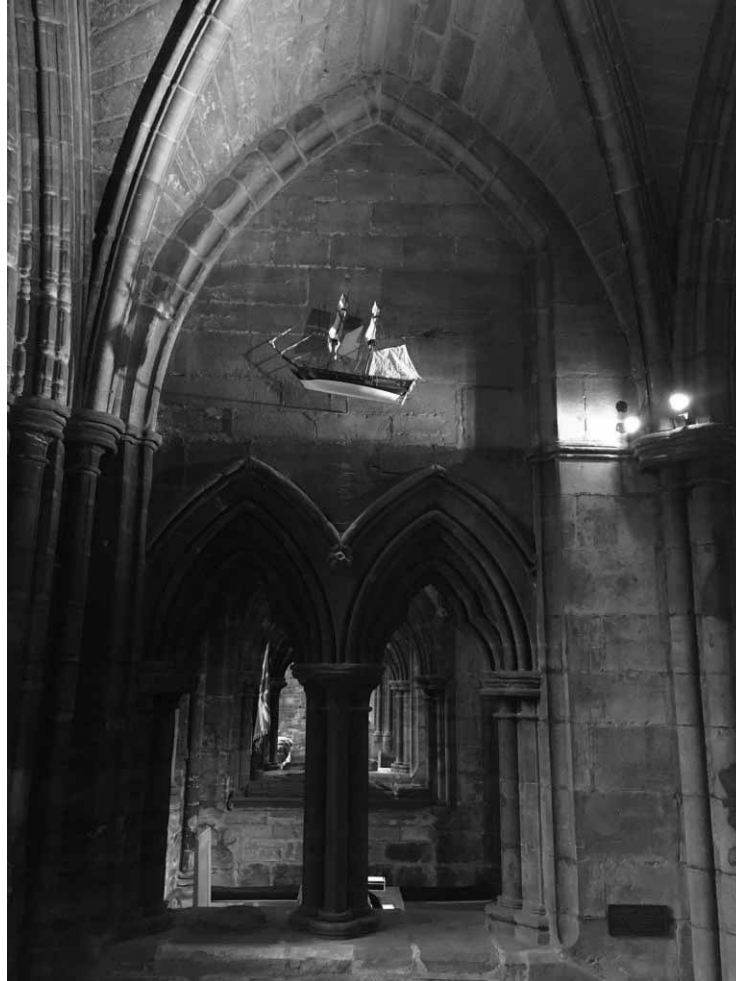
The Cathedral Chronicle published the following description of the model's arrival:

'At the end of 2004, the Society of Friends was bequeathed a ship model by the last Sheriff Stanley Gimson with the request that the two-masted brig be hung in the Cathedral in the manner of a votive ship as a reminder of the Clyde's tradition of shipbuilding. After discussions with Historic Scotland it was agreed that best location for the ship would be the St Nicholas Chapel at the east end of the Lower Church, – St Nicholas being the Patron Saint of Sailors. At the end of February this year, the ship was finally installed on the south wall of the Chapel. Votive ships have been hung in churches for many hundreds of years and may have been gifted in thanks for safe delivery from a perilous journey or as a simple reminder to the congregation of a long standing association with the sea or shipping and the community's indebtedness to those who risk their lives in the business of fishing and trading. Last October the Society outing visited St Monans Church in Fife, where two such models can be seen. The ship is fixed to the wall by a very slim bronze bracket, commissioned by the Society, and, as is customary, faces east with its bow slightly raised. As the model is fixed quite high up on the wall, the best vantage point is from the top of the steps leading

⁵⁷³ Correspondence with G. Collie, Joint Session Clerk, 07/02/2017.

down to the St Nicholas Chapel. I am sure that the ship will be of great interest to the many visitors who come to the Cathedral.'⁵⁷⁴

Iain M White, Hon Secretary, Society of Friends of Glasgow Cathedral, 2007



The brig model is displayed high up on a wall in the St Nicholas Chapel in a lower part of Glasgow Cathedral

⁵⁷⁴ White, "Votive Ship." <https://www.glasgowcathedral.org/votive-ship/>



The model is mounted on the wall by a bracket

Photographs courtesy of Glen Collie, Joint Session Clerk, Glasgow Cathedral, and Stephen Umpleby, Artefacts Conservation Services.



Case Study 34: *Greenock Old West Kirk, 'The Sailor's Kirk'*

Denomination: Church of Scotland

Name: None

Type: 20-gun Frigate

Date of Build: 1864

Builder: Craftsmen from Robert Steele & Sons Shipbuilders, Greenock

Donor: Robert Steele, (1791-1879) shipbuilder

Length Overall (mm): 1600

Breadth (mm): 200

Height (mm): 950

Material: Wood

Construction: Plank on frame

Description: Hull painted black with white line around gun-deck, gun ports red on undersides, no name on bows or transom. Under Waterline: Copper paint. Bulwark: Painted black with gilded laurel motif at forecastle and poop deck bulwarks, and detailing on quarter galleries. Figurehead is female three-quarter length bust in late nineteenth century dress; black jacket with high collar and 'leg-of-mutton' sleeves, white ruff at neck and full red skirt, hair appears blond and plaited on top of head. The transom is black with gilded decoration, two gilded and red stern lanterns. Masts and spars are white with black bands, the yards are black

with white tips. There are tin flags Union 'Jack' on bow-sprit, St George's cross on foremast and white ensign on stern.

Rigging: Fully rigged, no sails.

Location: hanging by a chain from the ceiling above the Sailor's Loft, in line with the front rail of the loft, bows towards the pulpit below.

Restoration: Restored 1926, 1957 & 1983 by Munro family

The Old West Kirk was originally completed in 1591 and underwent an enlargement in 1677. The church had four galleries or lofts, two for local lairds, one for farmers and one for sailors. Permission to build the Sailor's Loft gallery was recorded in the minutes of the Kirk Session 9th December 1697;⁵⁷⁵ 'Which day after prayer, the Session being met, a petition was presented to them by the Masters of Ships and Seamen in this parish wherein they desired the Session might consent to their building a Loft in the South Aisle of the Kirk. The Session considering the same find it reasonable and consent thereto with all appointing Mr Kelso and William Rowan to recommend to them supplementing the poor belonging to Seamen out of their own box providing always this loft be built upon their own proper charges and not off money already mortified.'⁵⁷⁶ Subsequently the loft was erected in 1698.⁵⁷⁷ The gallery opposite is the Farmer's gallery above which hangs a plough.

The original church and surrounding burial ground became overcrowded and were declared 'unhealthy'⁵⁷⁸ and were subsequently closed in 1841. As the population of the town grew the Old West Kirk was refurbished to accommodate the expanding congregation and reopened with a rededication service on 25th December 1864. The church closed again in 1925 so as to accommodate the construction of a new shipyard. The entire church was moved brick by brick and re-opened in its present location on the Esplanade in 1928.

Above the Sailor's Loft hangs a model of a 20-gun frigate, installed in the newly restored church in 1864, the third or fourth replacement to one reputedly made from

⁵⁷⁵ National Records of Scotland, CH2/1418/7, p.37, Greenock Kirk Session, Minute Book.

⁵⁷⁶ *Ibid.*

⁵⁷⁷ Weir, *History of the Town of Greenock*.

⁵⁷⁸ Smith, *History of Greenock*.

a piece of wood from the wreckage of a Spanish galleon,⁵⁷⁹ but this has never been confirmed. Reference to its immediate predecessor and clue to its origins comes from a 1921 history of the town, 'From the roof above the Sailors' Loft was originally suspended a model 20-gun frigate, planked and fully rigged. It fell to pieces whilst being removed in 1836. At the restoration of the church the model of a modern clipper ship was substituted, but on its being considered out of harmony with the ancient building it was given over to the chapel of Sir Gabriel Wood's Mariners' Asylum, and a miniature 20-gun frigate, made from a drawing in "Charnock's Marine Architecture," published in 1801, took its place'.⁵⁸⁰

The current model has been completely restored at least twice according to Captain Archie Munro, descendant of a local sea-faring family who have been members of Old West Kirk since at least 1898 when Colin Munro was ordained as an elder of the Kirk, and his son was made Trustee and Kirk Treasurer in 1899.⁵⁸¹ Captain Munro's father, Captain James Munro, had some of the original rigging removed in 1926 by Dan McNeill, a model maker at nearby Caird's Shipyard, at around the time that the church was closed prior to being moved to the current Esplanade site. McNeill was instructed by Captain Munro 'to replace the rigging that had perished, but left what was still in good condition.'⁵⁸²

The model was then 'partly re-rigged and reconditioned'⁵⁸³ by Captain James Munro in November 1957, at which time Archie Munro recalls that 'the grocer and local historian, John B Scrymgeour, maintained that the first ship, a 20-gun frigate, fully planked and rigged, was installed on the opening of the Sailors' Loft in 1697'⁵⁸⁴. Captain Archie Munro undertook a further restoration of the model in 1983.

⁵⁷⁹ Bolton, *The Old West Kirk*.

⁵⁸⁰ Smith, *History of Greenock*, p.111.

⁵⁸¹ Letter from Captain A D Munro MRIN FNI to Mrs Margaret Mackay, Greenock, 11th February 2008. Reproduced with permission from Mrs M Mackay.

⁵⁸² Letter of commendation from Rev. John Morrison, Minister of Old West Kirk, Greenock, December 1957.

⁵⁸³ *Ibid.*

⁵⁸⁴ Letter from Captain A D Munro MRIN FNI to Mrs Margaret Mackay, Greenock 11th February 2008. Reproduced with permission from Mrs M. Mackay.

Other References

Letter from Captain A D Munro MRIN FNI to Mrs Margaret Mackay, Greenock 11th February 2008. Reproduced with permission from Mrs M Mackay.



The figurehead is a three-quarter female bust in a black jacket and red skirt



Port side stern view showing stern lanterns and decorated transom



The model hangs above the Sailor's Loft,



Old West Kirk from the Esplanade



Case Study 35: *St Cuthbert's Church, Saltcoats*

Denomination: Church of Scotland

Name: Caledonia

Type: 50-gun French Frigate

Date of Build: c.1804

Builder: William Dunlop RN

Donor: William Dunlop RN

Length: 1860

Breadth: 1350

Height: 560

Material: Wood, paint, metal fittings, cord rigging with cotton sails

Construction: Block with built up topsides

Description: Hull painted green below waterline, gold waterline, and black above with gun deck in white. Name painted in gold on white at bow. Guns black with gold detailing on the tompions. Transom is painted black with gilded decoration and painted stars, no stern guns. Lower masts painted white with black bands, and varnished wood above.

Rigging: Fully rigged, without sails.

Flags: Flags at stern and bowsprit almost disintegrated, probably the White Ensign, foremast carries one signal flag, a Blue Peter, signalling that the ship is about to set sail and all crew must board - all persons must repair on board, vessel about to sail.

Figurehead: gilded female figure wearing a broad-brimmed hat

Additional features: four tenders port and starboard plus one tender suspended at stern

Location: Against a wall at rear of nave, north side, in front of a seating gallery above the north entry door. Attached to wall via port side metal bolt.

Restoration: Repainted and re-rigged, 1905, by Mr William Love, and in 1959 by Mr William Lees, Helensburgh

A brass plaque close to the model reads: 'The model of the *Caledonia* Frigate suspended from the roof of this church is the workmanship and gift of Mr William Dunlop, Late gunner's mate on board His Majesty's Ship St Joseph 1804'.

In 1804, in thanksgiving to God for his preservation during the Napoleonic wars, William Dunlop gifted the model to the previous parish church, then known as Ardrossan Parish Church, and situated in the Kirkgate, where it now houses the Saltcoats and North Ayrshire Museum. The model hung there until 1908, when the present church was built, and the model transferred to it.

In 1904 the Kirk Session received a letter from the model maker's grandson, as recorded in the Kirk Session Minutes;

'Moderator read letter he had received from Mr John D Tannahill. Residing in London. Grandson of Mr William Dunlop the gentleman that presented ship [sic] to Ardrossan Parish Church. A friend had sent him a copy of Ardrossan & Saltcoats Herald with Mr Brown's special sermon to sailors and fishermen. (Copy of Letter) Dear Sir I have read with great pleasure your discourse in connection with the model of the frigate that has hung so long from the ceiling of the Parish Church of Ardrossan. I am the grandson of the builder and donor of that ship. And the considerate and instructive way in which you have referred to him has touched me deeply. And I have to thank you for the kind words you said. My grandfather lies buried with certain members of his family in the church yard a short distance from the belfry, and all the others of his family have now passed away - my mother being his last surviving

daughter and she now lies at rest in London...I never heard much as to the history of the ship. My grandfather made it and gave it as a thank offering to the Church and appears to have said no more about it afterwards. The little round brass tablet was engraved by the Minister and Elders at the time. And when I was a boy at the Parish School in Salt-coats the Session Clerk made a search in the old records to see what the deliberations were when the ship was accepted by the Church. But could not find any minute thereof. So far as I know the brass tablet is the only record. If the Church would allow it, I would be very glad to pay the cost of re-rigging the ship'⁵⁸⁵

Subsequently, in December 1905, the Session received a cheque for the sum of £6 from Mr Tannahill 'to pay re-rigging and painting ship'⁵⁸⁶ and the following month 'Mr William Love, painter, was instructed to get the ship painted.'⁵⁸⁷

A new parish church was built in 1908 and the ship model was transferred to its present location. A note from the Kirk Session Minutes 7th December 1908 records this; 'Moderator proposed that Ship be transferred to New Church and hung up on second main couple at Gallery.'⁵⁸⁸

In 1959, the model, now 155 years old, was again in need of cleaning and restoring. This work was undertaken by Mr William Lees of Helensburgh, who produced the following report, now framed and hanging alongside the model on the wall of the church:

'The model is evidently that of a large French frigate of the period 1790, of about 1250-1500 tons, captured by the British and re-armed with 24-pounder and 32-pounder carronades, 50 in all. Evidence of her French origin is seen in the forecastle bulwarks, and in her comparative lack of sheer. British frigates did not adopt these features till near the close of the Napoleonic War. The model bears evidence of having been built probably by an able-seaman. Everything in-board is meticulously exact, as is instanced by the ringbolts and eyebolts for the gun tackles, and what remains of her original rigging. Outboard, too, details are exact down to the water-line, and there, as is the case with many sailor-built models, lack of knowledge of the underwater shape leads to inaccuracies. Ex Voto models are very rare in Scotland, and this one - a ship of war - is probably unique, though unfortunately, the "sea-changes" she

⁵⁸⁵ National Records of Scotland, CH2/1033/14, Ardrossan Kirk Session: Minute Book.

⁵⁸⁶ *Ibid.*

⁵⁸⁷ *Ibid.*

⁵⁸⁸ *Ibid.*

has suffered in rig, boats etc., in previous “restorations”, have made her less valuable as a historic piece.”

At this time the model was suspended by a bracket to the wall rather than by a chain from the ceiling as before.

Other References

‘In Ardrossan Parish Church (which is in Saltcoats) there is suspended from the ceiling a model of the *Caledonia*, a frigate of fifty guns. This model was constructed by one William Sunlop [sic], gunner’s mate on His Majesty’s ship *San Josef*, and was presented by him in 1804 to the church. It hung from the ceiling above the gallery until 1908, when it was transferred to its present position in the new building. Saltcoats was formerly a port with considerable activity. The church previous to the one which the model was gifted had a special part reserved for shipmasters and sailors, called the Sailor’s Loft.’⁵⁸⁹

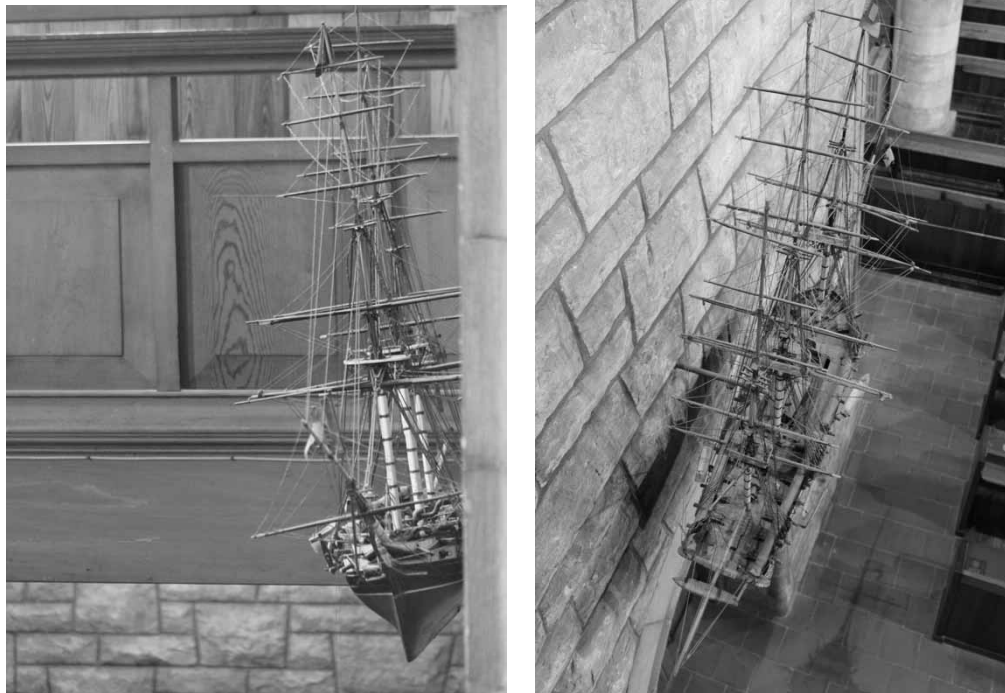
A Votive Ship a letter from James G McBurnie, *The Mariner’s Mirror*, 1929

‘There is also some conflict of detail in the various stories concerning the *Caledonia*, model of a fifty-gun frigate, which hangs in St Cuthbert’s Church, Saltcoats, to which it was transferred in 1908, when the new church was built, from the old parish church, Ardrossan, where it had been located for 104 years. The main theme of its story is that the model was made by William Dunlop, a Saltcoats native who was taken by the Press Gang and rose to be a gunner’s mate on board the man-o-war, *Caledonia*, and that it is a replica of the Spanish ship *San Josef*, captured from the Spaniards in 1797 and aboard which Nelson received the swords of the vanquished Spanish officers. An account given by a great-grandson of Dunlop, however, maintains that Dunlop served on the captured ship, renamed the *St Joseph*; and his version agrees with the others in saying that the Saltcoats sailor made the model and presented it to the church as a thank-offering for his escape when an enemy shot shattered his berth as he lay in his hammock, leaving him unharmed. When the model was presented to the church in 1804, Dunlop headed a public procession, himself pushing a barrow on which his model was mounted; and in accepting the gift, the church authorities granted the donor and his family the free use of one of the long seats in the Sailor’s Loft.’⁵⁹⁰

Ship in the Kirk, James D Leslie, 1951

⁵⁸⁹ J G McBurnie, "A Votive Model," *Mariner’s Mirror*, 15 no.1 (1929), p.81.

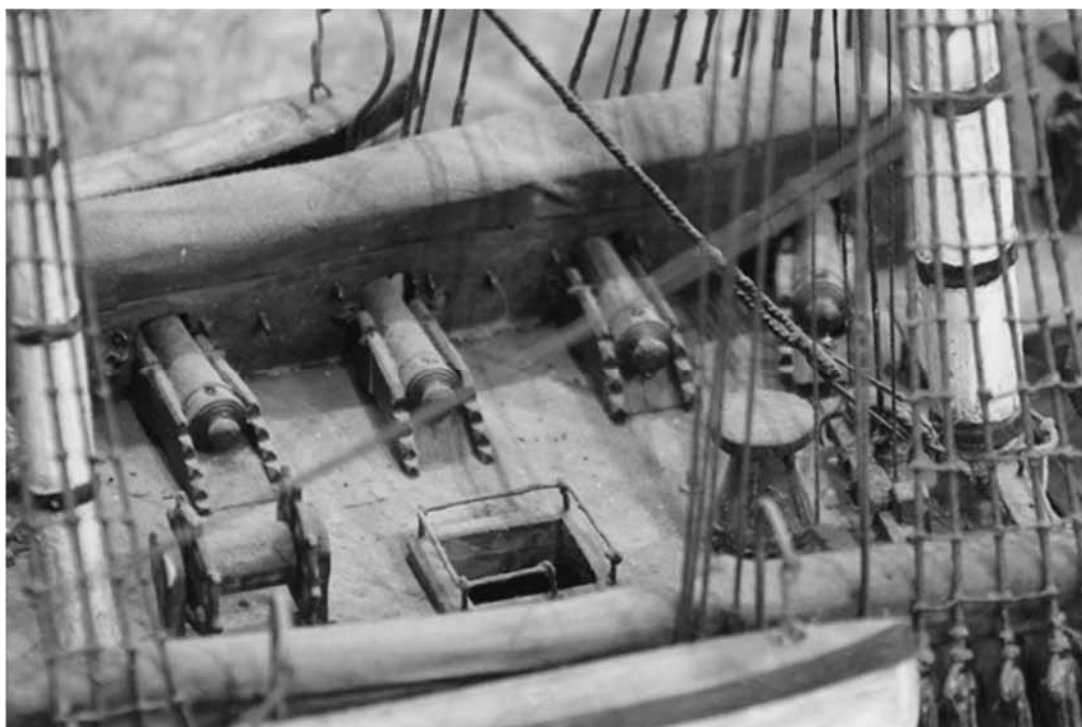
⁵⁹⁰ Leslie, "Ship in the Kirk," p.46.



Caledonia bow view and as seen from above from the gallery



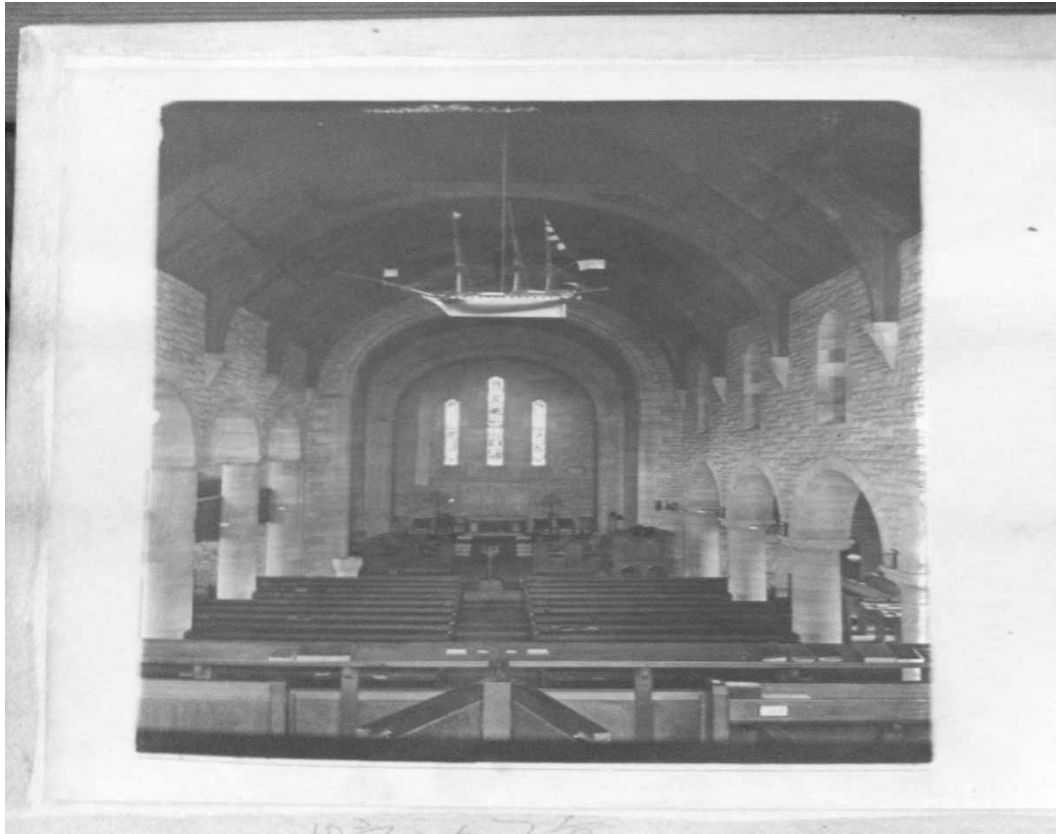
A brass plaque was installed below the model



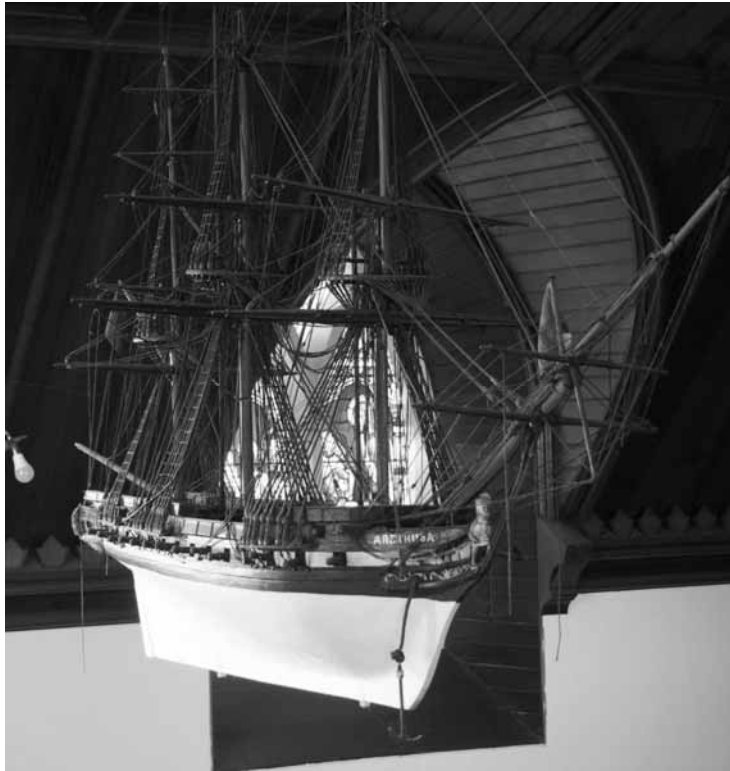
Deck details



The name *Caledonia* is written in gold at the bow, the figurehead is visible



Caledonia was previously hanging in the former Ardrossan Parish Church before it was demolished and the model moved to the new church in Saltcoats



Case Study 36: *Auld Kirk, Ayr*

Denomination: Church of Scotland

Name: Arethusa

Type: 42-gun

Date of Build: 1802

Builder: Unknown

Donor: Unknown

Length Overall mm: 2000

Breadth mm: 660

Height mm: 1500

Material: wood, paint, cotton cloth, thread, gesso, glass, metal fittings

Construction: Block with built up topsides

Description: Hull painted white below the waterline and black above with white at the gun deck. The figurehead is a full length male figure, in uniform, with detailed facial features and decorative details to his costume, possibly intended to represent Lord Nelson. Figurehead, name and scroll decorations at bow, quarter galleries and stern are all gilded. Masts and spars are varnished dark wood with black painted yards. The transom is decorated with gilded scroll work

above the stern windows. Quarter galleries and stern galleries have windows and appear to be decorated with gesso, highlighted with gilding and painted relief. Guns are full barrel, projecting through the hull

Rigging: Fully rigged no sails, although showing some signs of wear with loose lines. Bowsprit has jib boom and spritsail yards.

Flags: St George Cross at bow, Union Jack on foremast, unidentifiable flag on main mast, red flag on mizzen, and blue ensign on stern.

Location: Hanging by chain from ceiling in front of and above the Sailor's Loft, to the left of the pulpit

The church building dates from 1654, and had alterations made to it in 1836 to change the shape to a cruciform layout, providing three seating lofts for the Merchants, Sailors and Trades.⁵⁹¹

This model replaces an earlier model given in 1662 by the crew of a shipwreck; 'a model of a barque given by French sailors in 1662 in thanks for help Ayr folk gave after they were shipwrecked in Ayr bay.'⁵⁹²

Other References

'Though itself not competing in age with the Kinghorn model, the ship which hangs above the Sailor's Loft in the Auld Kirk of Ayr provides a link in the continuity of a similar tradition dating back to close upon three hundred years. In 1682 the seafarers of Ayr are said to have "got over the coals" for hanging a model ship in the church without the magistrates permission: but having expressed themselves "very sorie" for their offence, their crave that the ship be allowed to remain was granted, and it continued to hang in the church until 1802, at which time it had become "fragile and decayed." After lying for some time in the Harbour Office, it was repaired by someone and placed in the Public Library, whence it was later returned to the church. According to another version, the original model was gifted by a French crew whose ship had been wrecked in Ayr Bay. As a thank offering for the kindness shown them by the towns-people, the French sailors made the model after their return to France and sent it to the Town Council of Ayr, who in turn presented it to the church. Probably the facts, or as near as we can get to them now, are that when the seventeenth-century model was

⁵⁹¹ Auld Kirk Ayr church website.

⁵⁹² Correspondence with church secretary, January 2019; Snook, *Auld Kirk of Ayr (St. John the Baptist)*.

taken down in 1802, it was replaced by the present ship, the name of which *Arethusa*, fits in with that date as being near enough to the period of the *Saucy Arethusa*'s famous exploit in the English Channel. Whether there actually was any association with a French ship-wrecked crew with either model is something which no available records seem to make clear.⁵⁹³ —

John D Leslie, 1951



Quarter gallery windows and red painted tompions visible in this stern view

⁵⁹³ Leslie, "Ship in the Kirk," pp.45-6.



Arethusa hangs above the Sailor's Gallery, bows heading away from the pulpit



The bulwarks have been painted red



The decorated transom



The figurehead is unusual in including legs



Auld Kirk Ayr



Case Study 37: *Wick St Fergus Church, Wick*

Denomination: Church of Scotland

Name: Exmouth & U22

Type: E-Class Destroyer

Date of Build: 2014

Builder: Leslie Darton

Donor: Leslie Darton via the HMS Exmouth Association

Length Overall mm: 790

Breadth mm: 220

Height mm: 270

Material: wood, paint, cotton cloth, thread, wire and metal fittings

Construction: Plank on frame

Description: A scratch-built diorama model showing HMS *Exmouth* underway at sea with the German U-boat *U22* alongside. Painted battleship grey, with black painted ports.

Rigging: Fully rigged

Flags: White ensign at stern, signal flags on main mast.

Location: On a table at the rear of the church alongside various HMS *Exmouth* memorabilia, called informally 'Exmouth Corner'.

Wick St Fergus Church was built in 1830 as a replacement for the 'new' church built in 1798, itself a replacement of the old church at the West End of the High Street which dated from the sixteenth century. Following the Disruption of 1843, the church became known as Wick North Parish Church, and from 1931 as Wick Old Parish Church,

as the splinter churches; Wick Free, United Free and Wick Bridge Street went their separate ways, only to rejoin in 2009 as Wick St Fergus.

On 21st January 1940 HMS *Exmouth*, whilst escorting an ammunition ship to Scapa Flow, was torpedoed and lost with all hands off the coast of Caithness at Wick. The first that the public knew of the sinking was when bodies washed up on the shore at Wick a week later. Many of the bodies were wearing life jackets and wreckage from a lifeboat was found. The captain of the ship being escorted, fearing attack by the submarine, continued on to Shetland where the alarm was raised, but despite making it into the lifeboats no survivors were found. In total eighteen bodies were washed ashore and buried with full military honours in a war grave at Wick cemetery. Due to the restrictions on reporting and the difficulties in travelling during wartime, none of the crew member's families were present at the mass funeral, however representatives from all the armed services, local dignitaries and clergy from the Church of Scotland, Church of England and Roman Catholic church were present, along with the entire townspeople.⁵⁹⁴

In June 2001 it was reported that divers had found the destroyer's wreck site 20 miles off Wick.⁵⁹⁵ On 2nd September 2001 relatives of those men lost on the ship were taken out to the wreck site for a remembrance ceremony with representatives of the Royal Navy and the church. It was at this occasion that the HMS Exmouth Association was formed, 'with the aim of furthering an interest in this fine ship and perpetuating the memory, courage and comradeship of the entire ship's company...[and] intention to maintain a strong and continual link with the community of the Wick St. Fergus Church of Scotland'.⁵⁹⁶ The association sends money for church flowers in January each year, and it also send two wreaths for Remembrance Sunday, one for the church and one for the war graves in Wick Cemetery. The wreck site has subsequently been given protected War Graves Status to prevent scavenging trophy hunters. In 2005 a memorial plaque was erected in the church along with a cap badge and a book of remem-

⁵⁹⁴ "Fifteen Buried in One Grave," p.1.

⁵⁹⁵ "Divers find destroyer wreck."

⁵⁹⁶ HMS Exmouth 1940 Association, "The HMS Exmouth 1940 Association," 2001. Accessed 14/03/2017. <http://www.hms-exmouth1940.co.uk/home.html>

branch with a list of all crew member's names, photographs etc. A White Ensign was donated by the Admiralty.⁵⁹⁷

The ship model, a diorama showing both HMS Exmouth and the German submarine which sank it, was gifted to the church at a service in May 2014. It was made by Leslie Darton, son of Stoker 1st Class, Leslie Charles Darton, who was killed on board HMS *Exmouth* in 1940. He described making the model 'from scratch, i.e. not a commercial plastic kit but using mainly balsa wood, dowel, wire and 'odds and ends'.⁵⁹⁸ Mr Darton's nephew was chairman of the HMS Exmouth Association. The donation formed part of a ceremony of affiliation with the Wick Sea Cadets whereby the 'best improved' cadet of that year is awarded the 'Exmouth Trophy'. A wreath was also laid at the memorial in 'Exmouth Corner' of the church. The model was donated to the Sea Cadets by the HMS Exmouth Association and it was felt that the most appropriate place for it to be displayed and preserved was with the white ensign, memorial plaque, photograph, ships badges and remembrance information in 'Exmouth Corner' at the church.⁵⁹⁹



It is the only diorama model in a Scottish church

⁵⁹⁷ Correspondence with John Cormack, curator of "Exmouth Corner," member of Wick St Fergus Church, Wick, May 2017.

⁵⁹⁸ *Ibid.*

⁵⁹⁹ *Ibid.*



Bow view of HMS *Exmouth* and U22



Exmouth Corner at Wick St Fergus Church

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