



Sailors Maritime Woolwork, Sailors Woolies, Needle Craft Naval Picture

Sold



REF: 28135

Height: 38.5 cm (15.2")

Width: 63.5 cm (25")

Framed Height: 52 cm (20.5")

Framed Width: 77 cm (30.3")

Framed Depth: 77 cm (30.3")

Description

Sailors Maritime Woolwork, Sailors Woolies.

A fine large example of an antique Victorian sailor's wool picture - or 'Woolie', in excellent condition.

'Woolies' became popular in the 19th Century and was a traditional pastime of Sailors at sea making needle work pictures of their ships and the landscapes they sailed upon. Created from wool, silk and thread using the sewing and needle work skills the sailors picked up from routine duties, such as repairing sails and clothing. This folk art picture depicts a three mast sailing ship at anchor and fully dressed, you can clearly see the Union Jack and the four 'White Ensigns' (St George's Ensign). There is a small second vessel to the left and a launch can be seen below with figures of sailors on board and the oars in the water, to the left in the background is a fort. It is beautifully stitched, in wool fibre and the rigging and details have been picked out in cotton thread. This piece is believed to have been made by a Portsmouth sailor (Mr Steptoe). He was born in 1837 and a Navy personal in 1861 in Curacao. Most of his siblings were born in Portsmouth and the 1861 census records shows his brother in Algiers, also in the Navy. It's thought the family lived around Hove, Portsea Island, Portsmouth. Nicely framed in an old maple frame with gold slip and old original glass.

From Wikipedia

Dressing overall consists of stringing international maritime signal flags on a ship from stemhead to masthead, from masthead to masthead (if the vessel has more than one mast) and then down to the taffrail. It is a sign of celebration, and is done for occasions, anniversaries, and events, whether national, local or personal.

Practice varies from country to country as to the order in which the signal flags are placed on the "dressing lines": in some places a specific order is laid down, in others there is no such provision; either way, the intention is to produce a random succession of flags (i.e. not conveying any words or other messages), with the numerical and other pennants spaced equally and regularly along the line. Custom and regulations require that national or other flags not be mixed in with the signal flags when dressing a ship overall.

When a ship is properly dressed overall in harbor, ensigns (in addition to the one flown in the usual position at the stern) should fly at each masthead, unless displaced by another flag, e.g., that of a flag officer. A ship underway does not array herself with signal flags, but the masthead ensign(s) would still signify that she is dressed while underway.