

The Ship *Castine* Comes Home



by Richard M. Ames

The Castine Historical Society (CHS) recently purchased at auction a superb 1881 portrait of the ship *Castine* painted by Croatian-Austrian Basi Ivankovich (1815-1898), who was a sea captain before devoting himself to painting ship portraits at Trieste and Dubrovnik between the years of 1866 and 1894. Before we placed a bid, we conducted research to substantiate she was the ship *Castine* by decoding the flags flying from her mainmast. The flags are from the Commercial Code used from 1857-1900 and represent letters H, D, G, B. Consulting *Lloyds Register of Shipping* confirmed that the ship *Castine* was designated by these letters.

The *Castine* was built at the Noyes Shipyard, located approximately where the Maine Maritime Academy's training ship is docked today. She was the third largest and second-to-last ship constructed in Castine harbor, and with a life of almost 32 years, she has the distinction of being the longest living Castine built ship.

Figure 1: The Ship *Castine*, 1881, painted by Basi Ivankovich (1815-1898). Collection of the Castine Historical Society. The ship *Castine* here shown outside the port of Trieste in 1881. She was built at Castine in 1857 by Samuel T. Noyes and was 962 tons with dimensions of 170' x 35' x 18'. Owners were R. B. Sumner, 5/8, of New Orleans and Samuel Adams, 1/8; Samuel Noyes, 1/24; J. Haskell Noyes, 1/24; Samuel T. Noyes, 1/24 of Castine, and James Simpson, 1/8, of Chelsea, Massachusetts.

Adding this handsome portrait to the permanent CHS collection spurred me to learn as much about the ship as possible. First, I constructed her life from launch to demise from newspapers of the day which reported arrivals and departures of vessels from domestic and foreign ports. This exercise revealed discrete trade patterns that, upon further research, were related to historic, economic, and technological events.

Launch Until Outbreak of the Civil War (1857 – 1861): Cotton is King

The *Castine's* first voyage was a short one to St. John, New Brunswick. There she likely loaded lumber and sailed to Liverpool. After a return voyage to New Orleans, she pursued

2022 Calendar of Events

Bearing in mind that COVID is still with us, these are our anticipated plans for the 2022 season. As we get closer, we will decide if talks will be held in person or via Zoom. Final plans will be in the next *Castine Visitor*, on our website, and our Facebook page. Unless noted, all events are free.

June 6–October 10

“Clark Fitz-Gerald: Castine’s Celebrated Sculptor-in-Residence”

When Clark Fitz-Gerald (1917-2004) moved to Castine in 1956, he had already made a name for himself as a sculptor. Throughout his career, he achieved regional, national, and international renown for his work. The exhibition features sculptures, drawings, photographs, and writings by the artist.

June 17–October 10

Castine Uncovered Walking Tours

Friday, Saturday & Monday 10:00 a.m.
An hour-long tour of historic Castine.

Thursday, June 23

Clark Fitz-Gerald: Aspects of my Father’s Life

5:30 p.m. / An illustrated talk on the life and work of sculptor Clark Fitz-Gerald by his son, Stephen. Emerson Hall.

Saturday, June 25

2022 Season Open House

4:00-6:00 p.m. / Join us for a reception and viewing of our new exhibits. Refreshments served.

Thursday, June 30

Jewelry Valuation Day Fundraiser

10:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m. / Book an appointment for a preliminary valuation of your antique, vintage, or contemporary jewelry by Sacha Grippando of Bellwether Advisory & Appraisals. \$15 per appointment.

Thursday, June 30

Wearable Art - Studio Jewelry from the 1940-80s

7:00 p.m. / Sacha Grippando will give an illustrated talk on mid-20th century jewelry design to complement the Clark Fitz-Gerald exhibition. CHS Mitchell Room.

Friday, July 22

Castine House & Garden Tour

10:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m. / Tour ten beautiful homes and six gracious gardens. Tour tickets \$45 through July 10, and \$50 July 11-22. Sponsored by Bangor Savings Bank and Saltmeadow Properties with media sponsor *DownEast/Maine Homes* magazines. Purchase tickets and learn more at castinehousetour.org.

Thursday, August 4

The 13th Annual Deborah Pulliam Memorial Lecture, “Clark Fitz-Gerald: Castine’s Celebrated Sculptor-in-Residence”

7:00 p.m. / Guest Curator, Carl Little, will deliver an illustrated lecture on Clark Fitz-Gerald’s life, work, and place in modern sculpture in Maine and beyond. Delano Auditorium, Leavitt Hall, Maine Maritime Academy, Castine.

Saturday, August 6:

Jibbies Art Class: Making Sculpture from Found Objects in Nature

9:30 a.m.-Noon / Co-sponsored by the Castine Arts Association. Participants will learn how sculptor Clark Fitz-Gerald made “jibbies” from nature and make your own. The class is open to all ages and abilities. Pre-registration at castinehistoricalsociety.org.

Thursday, August 18

Annual Meeting and Program: My Favorite Stories from Americans Who Tell the Truth

4:00-6 p.m. / Following a brief CHS business meeting, nationally-known artist, Robert Shetterly, will give a talk on portraits he’s painted and the stories of the people who affected him the most. A book signing will follow. Unitarian Universalist Congregation, Castine.

Abbott School Exhibits (17 School Street)

June 6 – September 5

Mon.-Sat. 10 a.m.-4 p.m. / Sun. 1-4 p.m.

September 9 – October 10

Fri., Sat., Mon. 10 a.m.-4 p.m. / Sun. 1-4 p.m.

Clark Fitz-Gerald: Castine’s Celebrated Sculptor-in-Residence

Penobscot Expedition 1779: Making Revolutionary History

The Castine Community Bicentennial Quilt

Grindle House Exhibits (13 School Street)

Staff work year-round Monday-Friday.

A limited number of research appointments are available. At this time, masking is required to enter this building. To schedule an appointment, contact curator@castinehistoricalsociety.org.

Castine Uncovered Walking Tours

June 17 – October 10

Fri., Sat., Mon. 10:00 a.m.

No reservations required. Private tours may be booked with advanced notice subject to guide availability.

Virtual History Tour of Castine

To download the app or access the web version of the tour, visit castinehistoricalsociety.org. Go to the “Visit” drop down button and click on Castine Virtual Tour.

We seek to invigorate our community through collaborative exploration and stewardship of our region’s rich history, engaging residents and visitors of all ages in Castine’s extraordinary past and, through it, that of New England and North America.

The Castine Visitor is published three times a year by the Castine Historical Society as a benefit of membership.

Karen V. Lyons, Editor

Director's Letter



by Lisa Simpson Lutts

One thing I've learned while serving as director of several history museums throughout my career is that change is constant. A somewhat ironic concept for institutions that deal with history which, for many not in our field, seems static and unchanging on the surface.

The most obvious changes that have occurred at the Historical Society over the last seven months have been staffing. As many of you know, at the end of December we witnessed a large change when Paige Lilly, who was our curator for the past 13 years, left to return to freelance work with her new consulting firm, Lilly Archival. We are, however, excited to be among her first clients.

Paige began her relationship with the Historical Society as an archives consultant in the late 1990s when she was helping a number of smaller organizations through a Maine grant program. She hopes to continue this rewarding work and add projects such as exhibit research and planning, corporate archives consulting, and organizing private and family collections.

Paige is working for us two days a week through June on special projects related to the collection. Her projects include organizing and inventorying our map collection, creating a final arrangement of, and finding aid for, our extensive Hale Family Archives, and helping orient our newest staff member to our collection.

After a nation-wide search among museum and archive professionals for Paige's replacement, in February we welcomed

Jules Thomson, who began as our new Collections Manager. Jules' education and job experience highly qualify her for the position. She holds advanced degrees in Medieval History and Archeology from Oxford University and St. Andrews University, and a Masters in Library and Information Science with an archives concentration from Simmons University in Boston.

Jules spent several years gaining archives experience in the UK. In 2013 she completed a traineeship in digitization and digital archives with the National Archives UK, and then worked for four years as Digital Access Officer for a county archives.

After returning to the U.S., she worked for the prestigious Congregational Library & Archives in Boston from 2017-2022. One of her primary projects was "New England's Hidden Histories," which digitized Colonial-era church records from diverse partner institutions and made them available online.

We are also pleased to introduce our new office manager, Mary Caron Durost. Mary may be familiar to some of you as she was the manager of the Castine Inn for the past 18 years. We are excited to have her on board!

As I write this, we are busy preparing for this season's exhibition, "Clark Fitz-Gerald: Castine's Celebrated Sculptor-in-Residence," which will open June 6. We look forward to welcoming you back for a summer and fall of exciting programs and events, including the long awaited Castine House & Garden Tour on Friday, July 22.

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three years in the profitable cotton trade, delivering cotton from southern ports to Liverpool and returning with manufactured goods.



Figure 2: U.S. enslaved labor versus cotton production.

During this period, Europe had an almost insatiable demand for cotton to feed their rapidly growing textile industries. The United States was uniquely positioned to meet this growing demand due to ready supplies of labor, land, and credit.¹ The labor component was dependent on the cruel institution of slavery, with increasing numbers of enslaved Africans and African Americans up until the outbreak of the Civil War. In 1830, 2 million enslaved workers produced 176 thousand tons of cotton, and by 1860, close to 4 million enslaved laborers produced over 1.1 billion tons of cotton (see figure 2).²

The Civil War starting in April of 1861 brought an abrupt end to the Cotton is King export era. With southern ports blockaded, US cotton exports plummeted from 3.8 million bales in 1860 to a few thousand in 1861, and American cotton was replaced by imports from India, Egypt, and Brazil.

An interesting incident involving the ship *Castine* occurred in May 1861 soon after the war began when the confederate privateer *Music* captured the *Castine* ship *John Jarvis* outside the mouth of the Mississippi River. In what became known as the Tit-for-Tat incident, the *Ellsworth American* reported the following:

The ship *John Jarvis*, seized at New Orleans by the rebels, is owned by the Messrs. Jarvis of Castine. Upon the receipt of the news, the Messrs. Jarvis took measures to get possession of the ship *Castine*, then and now lying at Castine, and owned entirely by parties at New Orleans. This ship arrived at Castine with a cargo of salt, very opportune'y [sic] for the owners of the ship *John Jarvis* to show the New Orleans gentry that they had commenced to play a game which might end in the 'biter getting bit.' (31 May 1861)

William Jarvis of Castine, one of the owners of the ship *John Jarvis*, wrote to the editor strongly denying these claims:

I wish to say most emphatically that the report is a gross falsehood, from beginning to end, so far as I am concerned. The ship [*Castine*] is partially owned by parties in this town. The owners out of town are particular friends of the Messrs. Jarvis. It is farthest from their thoughts to injure even an enemy in the present crisis. (1 June 1861)

The editor of the *Ellsworth American* got the last word publishing the following response:

The facts, as related with some further particulars, were furnished us by a member of the Hancock bar, now in Bangor, who said that a Mr. Dunbar, the agent of the Messrs. Jarvis, gave him the information at his office the preceding Monday. So, if there is any 'gross falsehood' in the report, it lies at the door of Mr. Jarvis' neighbor, and of one who claimed to be his agent. (16 June 1861)

We will never know the truth behind these dueling accusations, but the incident did cause the *Castine's* owners to consider options to reduce shipping risks introduced by war. In CHS collection letters from December 1861, New Orleans and *Castine* owners considered re-registering her in the name of a recently added German owner to maintain neutrality. This did not happen, but *Castine's* home port was changed from New Orleans to Castine to establish her as a Northern-based vessel.



Figure 3: Panorama of North Island, Chincha Islands, with part of fleet waiting for guano. No 1, 1865. The Miriam and Ira D. Wallach Division of Art, Prints and Photographs: Photography Collection, The New York Public Library. Retrieved from <https://digitalcollections.nypl.org/items/828f5520-c3db-0134-fac9-00505686a51c>.

Civil War Years (1861 – 1865): The Ghastly Guano Trade

The guano trade began in the early 19th century on the three small Chincha Islands off the southern coast of Peru. Seabirds gorging on fish in the surrounding nourishing waters bred predator-free for millennia, and their nitrogen-rich droppings mounded to heights exceeding 200 feet. Worldwide demand



Figure 4: Strata of guano, Chincha Islands, 1865. The Miriam and Ira D. Wallach Division of Art, Prints and Photographs: Photography Collection, The New York Public Library. Retrieved from <https://digitalcollections.nypl.org/items/ef5e5070-c3db-0134-f8ee-00505686a51c>.

was created when Chincha Island guano was deemed the world's best fertilizer, and ships flocked to the islands from Europe and America to purchase guano from the Peruvian government. As many as 300 ships a year arrived to load guano during the 1840-1870 boom, and the 12 million tons of dung shipped during this period represented Peru's largest export by value.

The guano trade was a cargo of last resort for shipowners. It required two dangerous passages around the horn of South America, notorious for howling gales and punishing seas. During these voyages, crews were constantly managing sails high in the rigging, lashed by horizontal hail, sleet, and snow. Ropes were frozen solid, and death from slipping from the rigging onto the deck or into the roiling seas was a constant danger. Icebergs were another risk requiring round-the-clock lookouts to prevent collisions from sending vessels and their crews to their graves.³

When ships arrived at the Chincha Islands, the stench of guano was overbearing, and many vessels were anchored waiting for cargoes. Loading was achieved by sending the guano down long canvas chutes which dumped it directly into the ship's hold. This resulted in the entire ship being enveloped with noxious clouds of ammonia smelling dust. The only upside of this pungent and corrosive cargo was that it killed the ever-present rats that plagued sailing vessels.

Not only was guano a vile cargo, but just as the pre-Civil War cotton trade built upon the cruel institution of slavery, the guano trade relied on slave-like exploitation of forced labor.

Contractors were hired to procure labor, which they achieved by sending ships to China and advertising jobs in the California gold fields. During this time China was undergoing a period of poverty, and many were seeking better lives abroad. Once

they were on board, large numbers died during the five-month journey, and the duped survivors were forced to disembark and toil for years on the Chincha Islands.

In 1854 the labor conditions of the guano trade were brought to light in a *Times Picayune* article entitled "The Horrors of the Guano Trade." The article revealed that Chinese workers were hired for a five-year term and paid \$48 per year. They were forced to work 364 days in a row before earning just one Sunday off. Work began at sunrise, and each worker was required to mine five tons of guano before five p.m. If they failed to meet their quota, they were flogged and sent back to work. Under these desperate conditions the suicide rate was high, with workers jumping from the cliffs, slitting their throats, and burying themselves alive.

As the demand for labor increased, the contractors resorted to even less scrupulous tactics. In 1862 a slave raid at Easter Island in Polynesia was responsible for decimating the island. One thousand men were kidnapped and shipped to the Chincha Islands, where nine hundred died. Official protests were lodged and the surviving 100 were repatriated, carrying with them diseases which wiped out the remaining population of the island.⁴

During the Civil War years, the ship *Castine* completed two voyages from Europe around the horn to the Chincha Islands to load guano. On her second voyage she almost met her fate while returning to New York. Severely buffeted by a gale and being "badly strained and leaking," the *Castine* was forced to jettison 75 tons of guano to stay afloat. Upon arriving at New York in April of 1866, captain and crew must have been pleased to learn that guano runs were over because cotton was coming back!

Post-Civil War Years (1865 – 1872): Cotton is Back

After the Civil War, restoring cotton production and exports became an important ingredient for financial recovery. Enslaved labor transitioned into sharecropping and tenant farming, and cotton production increased to pre-war levels. This trend continued, and by 1870, America regained its position as the world's largest cotton producer.

Although American shipping had declined after the war and was facing increasing competition from British-built steam-powered vessels, sailing ships were still in significant demand to transport cotton to Europe.

During this period, the ship *Castine* returned to the more comfortable pattern of sailing from the ports of New Orleans, Philadelphia, and New York for the European ports Liverpool, Le Havre, and Antwerp. Eastward freight was primarily cotton,

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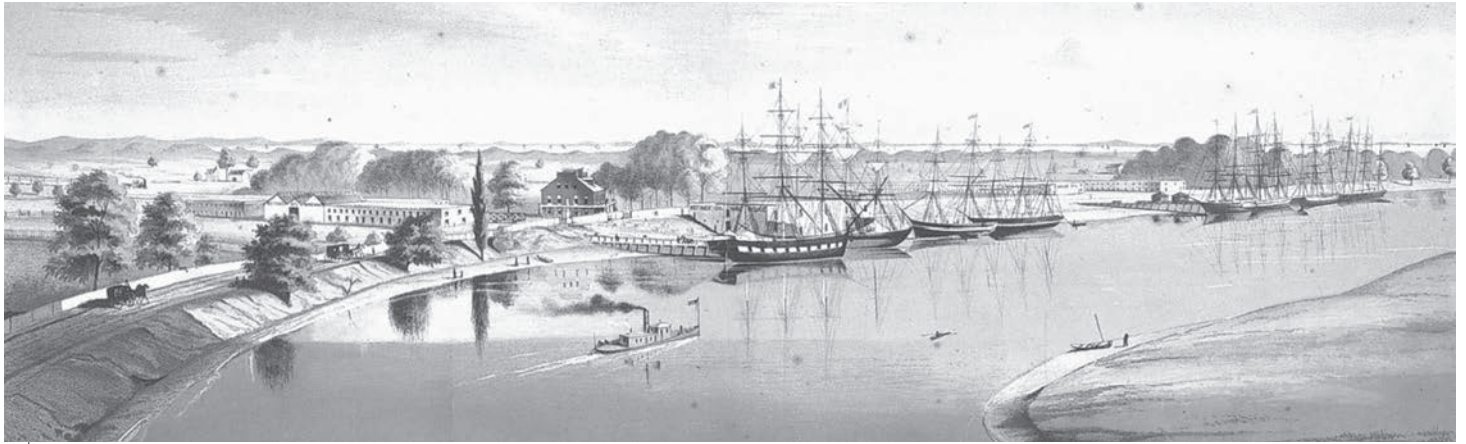


Figure 5: Ships Loading Oil, 1866. Detail from an advertisement for the Atlantic Petroleum Storage Company on the Schuylkill River Philadelphia, (Library Company of Philadelphia).

supplemented with wooden boards and hogsheads of beeswax. Westward cargoes were mostly manufactured goods such as lead and bars of railroad iron.

In July of 1866 after having just returned to New York loaded with guano, the ship *Castine* was heading to New Orleans to renew her participation in the cotton trade. On her southerly voyage she carried a large assortment of cargo, including a street railroad car lashed to her deck. She was so loaded down that she drew 18 feet water and could not get over a sandbar at the mouth of the Mississippi River. She had to be “lighted” by having some of her freight removed before being towed up to New Orleans, but thankfully the railroad car and the *Castine* made it in one piece.

Steam Takes Over Cotton Trade (1873-1880): Head for the Far East

Improvements in technology accelerated the dominance of steam-powered vessels across the Atlantic, forcing sailing ships out of the profitable cotton trade. To make matters worse, the US and Europe to India trade route was also taken over by steam with the 1869 opening of the Suez Canal. Previously, steamers were precluded from this trade route as it required journeying around the African continent, which lacked coaling stations. But now steaming through the Mediterranean and the Suez Canal reduced the distance of reaching India by 40%.⁵ This shortened route was not conducive to sail due to the lack of sufficient winds in the Mediterranean and the significant expense of having to be towed the entire length of the canal. Thus, sailing vessels such as the *Castine* were forced to seek routes for which sail still had an advantage. The answer was US and Europe to the very far east, including the Dutch East Indies (Indonesia), China, Australia, and Japan.

During this long-distance trading period the *Castine* sailed nine times around the cape of Africa. Her first voyage in this trade

was west from Calcutta to Boston, carrying an assorted cargo including bags of linseed, bales of jute bats, goat skins, buffalo hides, bags of saltpeter, chests of indigo, and cutch, an extract from the acacia tree used for tanning hides. After this, she sailed mainly from Boston to Batavia (current day Jakarta) via the coal ports of Great Britain. She carried cargoes of coal eastward and returned loaded with bags of sugar, baskets, and bundles of rattan. These round-trip voyages typically lasted close to a year.

On her final voyage during this era, the *Castine* sailed from Batavia to Philadelphia, where she loaded 37,000 cases of oil for Hyogo, Japan. She departed Philadelphia and again sailed westward around the horn of South America, arriving at Hyogo 204 days later having run into rough seas and jettisoned part of her cargo to survive. She then returned eastwards to San Francisco via Hong Kong, Australia, and Vancouver. After departing San Francisco with a cargo of 623,676 pounds of lead, she arrived at New York after a 119-day eastward voyage.

Upon arrival at New York, the *Castine*'s owners decided to sell her to local merchant Adolph Steengrafe, and her home port shifted from Castine to New York. However, her last voyage under her original ownership was a harbinger of her next eight-and-a-half years carrying kerosene from New York and Philadelphia to European ports.

US to Europe Oil Trade (1880 - 1889)

Before electricity, whale oil lamps were commonly used as a source of home lighting. Whale oil was preferred as it was cleaner burning and brighter than the alternative fat-based fuels that had been used for centuries.

The 1859 discovery of oil near Titusville, Pennsylvania was a game-changer. Kerosene, being a less expensive alternative to

whale oil, became the most common fuel for illumination and accelerated the already declining whaling industry. From the early to late 1880s, annual US oil exports doubled from 1 to 2 million barrels (see figure 6), and large sailing vessels like the ship *Castine* were well suited to take advantage of this trade.

The major petroleum ports during this time were Philadelphia, New York, and Baltimore. Shipments of kerosene and paraffin were loaded in metal cans packed in wooden cases or in forty-two-gallon wooden barrels.

Under New York ownership between 1880-1884, the ship *Castine* was commanded by Augustus Morgan and primarily transported oil and other merchandise between New York and Trieste, the most important port city of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. It was during this time that the Ship *Castine* portrait was painted by Ivonkovich in Trieste.

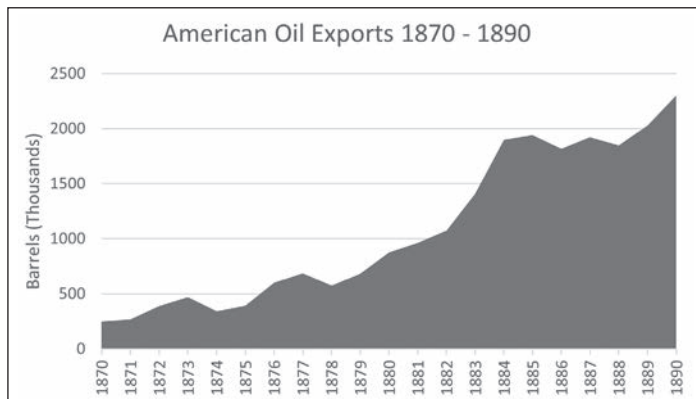


Figure 6: American Oil Exports 1870-1890. U.S. Energy Information Administration, Petroleum & Other Liquids.

On returning from Europe to New York in July of 1884, the ship *Castine* was sold again, this time to a German owner, Henry Steen, and her home port changed from New York to Bremen. Under the command of H. G. Lohman, she continued in the oil trade, loading at New York, Philadelphia, or Baltimore and delivering oil to Le Havre, Szczecin (Poland), and Hamburg. On a journey from Baltimore to Bremen with a cargo of naphtha, she arrived at St. George's, Bermuda in distress. The first we hear of this is from *The Philadelphia Inquirer* of 11 December 1888:

German ship *Castine*, from Philadelphia for Bremen, put into Bermuda on the 3rd inst. leaking and with loss of sails. Also, rudder and mainmast sprung in the late gale. She will probably have to discharge her cargo.

This event did not bode well, and *The Bermuda Royal Gazette* of 18 December 1888 reports a deteriorating situation in a column entitled "Marine Disasters, East End:"

Owing to the severe gale on the 13th inst., we have to report the following disasters to shipping, from the port of St. Georges. The German ship "*Castine*," in port of St.

Georges in distress, had discharged 2,000 bls. Naptha [sic], when the ship on the 13th inst. broke loose from her fastenings at the oil depot, Whites Island, and with three anchors out dragged ashore on the bar near the Island. The efforts of the tugboats to tow her off have proved unsuccessful, and she will probably have to be lightened, she still leaks 5 inches per hour.

On 22 January 1889 we learn that all hope for the ship *Castine* is lost in the following report from *The Philadelphia Inquirer*:

Ship *Castine* (Ger), hence for Bremen with a cargo of naptha [sic], which put into Bermuda a few weeks ago in distress, has been abandoned and was sold at auction on the 11th inst. Cargo will be forwarded to destination.

In summary, after a long and distinguished life successfully sailing the seas for almost 32 years, the ship *Castine* met her fate from a run-in with a gale in December 1888. After previously being lashed by this gale, she had been able to limp into the port of St. George's, Bermuda, leaking badly, and was able to offload some of her cargo at the oil depot on nearby White's Island. The punishing gale continued and caused her to break loose from the dock, and even with three anchors set, she was dragged onto a nearby sandbar. There she lay, severely leaking with sails shredded and a cracked mainmast and rudder until she was condemned and auctioned off for scrap.

To remind us of the ship *Castine*, which proudly carried the name of the town where she was built, the handsome portrait commemorating her illustrious career as a world trader now resides in the *Castine Historical Society*. The long life of this sturdily-built sailing ship reminds us of the history that shaped her trading patterns and likewise influenced the town of *Castine* during the times when wooden sailing ships ruled the seas. The next time you plan to be in town, please call and make an appointment to see this stately portrait which hangs in an honored position over the mantle in the *Grindle House*. Samuel P. Grindle, a ship's carpenter who built this house in 1851, may have helped build the ship *Castine*, and would be proud to know that a commemorative portrait of this successful ship now comfortably resides in the house that was also carefully crafted by his hands.

Endnotes

1. "Empire of Cotton", Sven Beckert, *The Atlantic*. <https://www.theatlantic.com/business/archive/2014/12/empire-of-cotton/383660/>.
2. <https://www.statista.com/statistics/1010169/black-and-slave-population-us-1790-1880/>.
3. Dana, Richard Henry. *Two Years Before the Mast*. Boston: Fields, Osgood, & Co., 1869.
4. Arnold, Caroline. *Easter Island: Giant Stone Statues Tell of a Rich and Tragic Past*. New York: Clarion Books, 2000, p 42.
5. "The Geography of Transport Systems," Jean-Paul Rodrigue. <https://transportgeography.org/contents/chapter1/emergence-of-mechanized-transportation-systems/>.

Care of Collections

by Jules Thomson, Collections Manager

It is with a great deal of humility and appreciation that I take over the writing of this column from former curator Paige Lilly, who has single-handedly steered stewardship of the Historical Society's collections for an impressive 13 years since 2008. (See Brooke Tenney's article for a more detailed run-down of Paige's history with the institution and her many accomplishments as curator and archivist.)



Jules Thomson

I came on board with CHS in February via the Congregational Library & Archives in Boston, and am still learning the ropes, to use an appropriately nautical metaphor. Paige is staying on part-time with CHS until June in her new role as a freelance archives consultant with Lilly Archival services. I can't tell

you how grateful I am for this personalized handing over of the torch. Paige has already patiently fielded approximately one thousand questions from me about the collections, and other varied topics such as "why is there a portrait of George Washington in our research library," and "where did all these cannonballs come from?"

Somewhat crucially, the transition also involves a change in job title from "Curator" to "Collections Manager" — emphasizing care of collections as the primary job function among several other competing duties.

In my professional understanding, care of collections is about three things, all of which are equally important: Physical preservation of items, intellectual control over the collections, and facilitating their use. Popular depictions of libraries, archives, and museums (LAMs) often seize upon the first point at the expense of the other two. Vaults of highly secured material exist in a closed circuit where the public does not seem to factor into the equation; LAMs workers are often depicted as curmudgeonly gatekeepers (Shh! Don't touch!), and the most time-consuming part of the job, arranging and cataloging materials, remains largely invisible.

Castine Historical Society is the ultimate LAM, in the sense that it is simultaneously an archive, a library, and a museum. One of

the primary things that drew me to the role was the multifaceted nature of the collections, which include (non-exhaustively) manuscripts, municipal records, maps, scrapbooks, sketchbooks, print, celluloid, and negative photographic materials, rare books, non-circulating library books, magazines, paintings, archaeological materials, commemorative objects, clothing... the list goes on.

Happily, thanks to Deborah Pulliam's generous bequest, CHS is uniquely well-provisioned with its climate-controlled, secure, fireproof, permanent on-site storage — a truly miraculous resource for a local historical society of our size. We can essentially boil down the concept of intellectual control of the collections to "how easy is it for us to locate and retrieve something." This is a job that is never truly complete, but I am happy to say my predecessors have made a valiant effort to accession, rehouse, arrange, label, and catalog collections mostly down to "item level" (as opposed to collection or box level), which offers us a more granular understanding of what we have in the vault. About 60-70% of the total collections have been cataloged, a very respectable ratio in a sector where backlogs are increasing at unprecedented rates (The US National Archives and Records Administration, for instance, has a backlog of around 70%, and this is not atypical even for smaller institutions). The implications of this process for public access to the collections are obvious, too.

The sheer amount of physical and intellectual labor that has been necessary to get us to this point is quite humbling, much of it accomplished in the last decade by Paige as she steered the workflow of collections and policy creation, technological upgrades, and catalog migrations in addition to large amounts of hands-on work. Numerous volunteers and interns have also lent a helping hand over the years, most significantly Sally Foote, who stewarded the collections in the pre-Paige (and pre-endowment!) days. I am personally deeply grateful for all of these contributions, and my gratitude only grows the more I realize just how much work and care has gone into preserving and organizing this ever-expanding treasure trove of Castine history.

As we look forward, the foundation upon which our collections stand, both physical and intellectual, will allow me to focus on creating new points of access as we look at expanding our inventories, finding aids, cataloging records, and digitizing photographic collections for online use. I don't want to downplay the behind-the-scenes work that is still needed to fully realize these goals, but because of the careful foundation that has been prepared over the years, we will have a much easier time of things than we would have otherwise. I'm truly looking forward to taking the helm and expanding into new areas. More on that in future issues!

Thank You Paige

Brooke Tenney, Board of Directors

Brooke Tenney, who has served on and off the CHS Board of Directors since 2009, shares her memories of Paige Lilly and the valuable contributions Paige has made during her 13 years at the Historical Society.



Paige in Abbott School collection storage, 2011.

If I close my eyes and think of Paige, I see her sitting at her desk on the second floor of the Abbott School. All around her are shelves of books, artifacts, document folders, file cabinets with postcards, maps, and photos in them. If it were exhibit preparation time, I would also see foam board, and a large paper cutter on

the table, and the printer spewing pages of text needing to be proofed and mounted.

I see Paige doing everything from graciously greeting visitors in the exhibit space, to training docents during an exhibit orientation meeting, to determinedly advocating for the factual interpretation of history.

I remember going with Paige to Emerson Hall to investigate the condition of the old town records where they were stored in a small brick-walled room in the cellar. The records were moldy, to put it mildly. Those important documents could not be moved to the CHS archives in that condition. Eventually, under Paige's supervision, the records were professionally cleaned and are now in the archival storage area at CHS.

Paige also initiated the CHS summer intern program to contribute to the field of museum studies. The interns contributed to CHS in many ways, working on collection and exhibition projects and were integral in reinvigorating the village walking tours.

Paige assisted thousands of researchers onsite, by phone or email. One particular project she took on with Lynn Parsons and a review committee was to help research and produce the book *Missions and Meeting Houses, Chapels and Churches: Four Centuries of Faith in Castine*.

I remember, and some of you do too I am sure, the monumental task of moving the collection from the second floor of the Abbott School to the new collection storage space. Everything on the shelves needed to be boxed and labeled, and the weather needed to cooperate for the move. Paige was instrumental in planning this move and worked with a team of volunteers and professional movers to accomplish this smoothly.

Paige collaborated on projects with the Wilson Museum, the Witherle Memorial Library, and other historical societies on the Blue Hill Peninsula. She grew the historical collection through donations, purchases, and ongoing work with volunteers. She also developed exhibit-related curriculum units for Adams School students for several years.

When Lisa Simpson Lutts became the Castine Historical Society's first executive director in 2017, Paige oriented her to the collection, Castine, and Castine's history.

Paige was always patient and helpful. She gently took advantage of teachable moments and never ever passed up the opportunity to make sure whatever we were saying or doing was based in historical fact.

I wish her the best on her next journey.



Paige and her daughter, Lorna, at the Moss Acre reception, 2017.

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