

Marblehead's Maritime History The Ship's Pass

by

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MARBLEHEAD

M·U·S·E·U·M



& HISTORICAL

S·O·C·I·E·T·Y

Marblehead's Merchant Fleet

- From the 1720's until the late 1830's Marblehead had a merchant fleet.
- The cured fish from the fishing fleet made a good starter cargo for trading.
- Marblehead owners made the profits which mostly stayed in Marblehead.
- They were reinvested and fueled Marblehead's economy.
- In the early 1800's the merchant fleet varied from fourteen to thirty seven vessels.

Rough Estimate of Marblehead Fleet

From: "Old Marblehead Sea Captains and the Ships in Which They Sailed"

Vessel Type	1800	1801	1802	1803	1804	1805	1820
Sloop		1	1				
Schooner	9	16	12	23	14	23	9
Brigantine	3	5	4	9	6	5	1
Brig		1		2		2	1
Bark			1			1	
Ship	2		1	3	5	2	3
Total	14	23	19	37	25	33	14

Model of Schooner Friendship; 1815



Model of Schooner Friendship. Early 1800s. By Captain John Bridgeo. Abbott Public Library

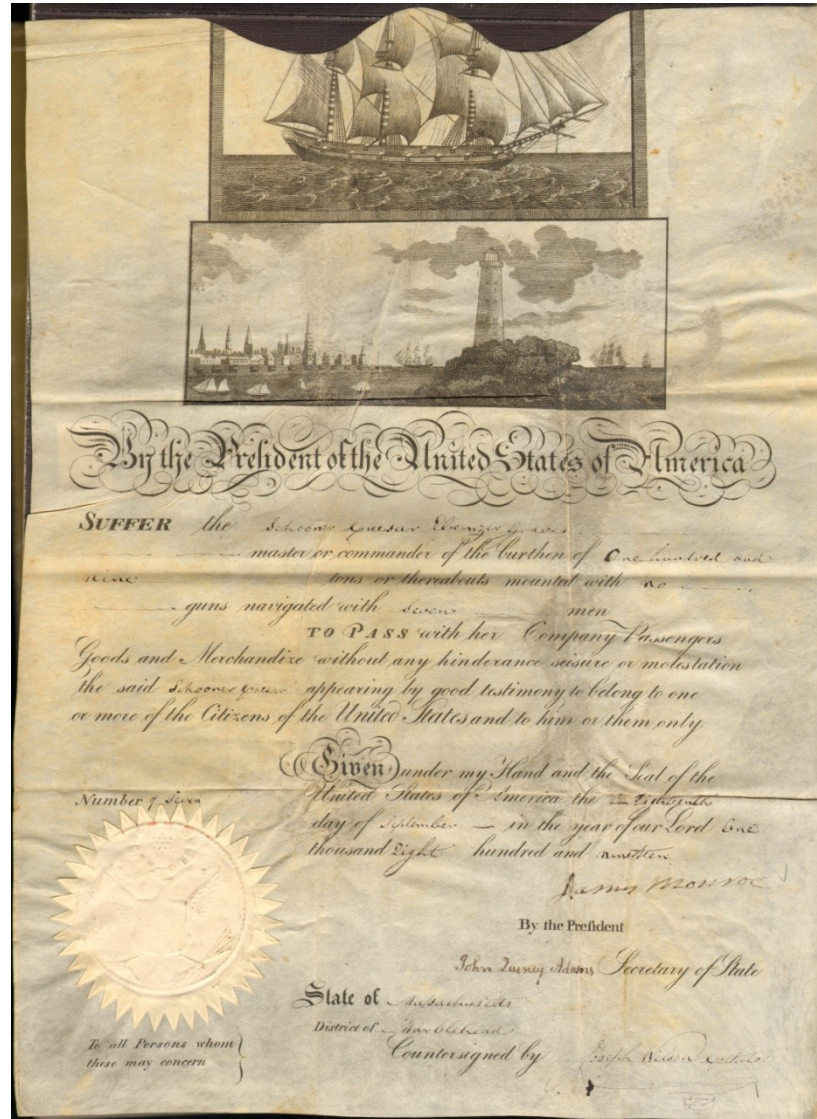
Dangers of the Sea

- Storms and Shipwrecks were always dangers.
- Pirates have always been a problem.
- In the late 1700's and 1800's war was an additional danger for the neutral U. S.
 - In wars Navies of Britain and France
 - Seized Vessels.
 - Impressed Crews.
- Privateers given Letters of Marque by France.
- The fledgling US government did what little it could to protect it's Merchant Marine.

US Ship's Pass

- Ship's pass was document to avoid ship and crew seizure by Barbary Coast Pirates.
- Signed by President and Secretary of State.
- Issued by Collector of Port.
- Top cut in pattern by hand.
- Top piece sent to Consul in Pirate State.
- In case of question, top piece could be matched with Ship's Pass
- Treaty with Pirate State had to be in place for Ship's Pass to be effective.

The Ship's Pass



Also Called
Mediterranean
Pass

Change of Command

- Captains of vessels changed frequently.
- Captain dies at sea.
- Voyages were long. Captains wanted time at home with families.
- New Captain generally assigned for new voyage.
- Whenever Captain changed an endorsement was added to the back of the Ship's Pass.
- Pirates were suspicious people!

Change of Command; Ship Java

District and
Port of Marblehead } November 26th 1822
Lewis Giddes } Having taken the oath
required by Law is at present Master of the
Whitish named Vesp in lieu of Nicholas
Broughton late Master.

Wm B Adams
Deput

MM&HS Ship's Pass Collection

No.	Vessel Type/Name	Captain	Men	Tons	Year	President
1	Brigantine America	Archibald Selman	10	157	1805	Jefferson
2	Schooner Success	Thomas Elkins	6	72	1806	Jefferson
3	Schooner John	George Barker	7	91	1807	Jefferson
4	Schooner Sally	Simon Lamprell	6	74	1809	Madison
5	Schooner Caesar	John Knight	7	91	1810	Madison
6	Ship Ganges	John Dixey	---	340	1817	Madison
7	Schooner Speedwell	Simon Williams	7	98	1817	Madison
8	Brigantine Phoebe	Joseph Proctor	6	104	1817	Monroe
9	Ship Java	Nicholson Broughton	17	291	1818	Monroe
10	Schooner Caesar	Ebenezer Graves	7	109	1819	Monroe
11	Schooner Essex	Samuel Adams	6	78	1821	Monroe
12	Schooner Algenoria	William Lecraw	6	91	1823	Monroe

MM&HS Ship's Pass Collection

No.	Ship Type/Name	Captain	Men	Tons	Year	President
13	Brig Seaman	Benjamin Gardner	10	181	1823	Monroe
14	Schooner Borneo	John Broughton	7	88	1824	Monroe
15	Brig Mary	Joseph Proctor	8	147	1826	J Q Adams
16	Schooner Salus	Peter Brown	6	82	1826	J Q Adams
17	Schooner Salus	Peter Brown	6	85	1827	J Q Adams
18	Brig Thoosa	Michael Power	7	110	1835	Jackson

Barbary Coast Pirates

- The Pirate States of Tripoli, Tunis, Algiers, and Morocco captured ships in the Mediterranean and Eastern Atlantic.
- Captured crews were either held for ransom or sold into slavery. Ships and cargo were sold.
- Slave raids also made on southern European coast and captives sold in slave markets.
- Most European countries found it cheaper to pay states tribute than maintain a naval squadron to suppress them.

Barbary Coast



U. S Pirate Protection

- Colonial shipping was protected from Barbary Pirates by British Ships Pass.
- During Revolution France provided protection.
- After Revolution US had no Navy and could offer no protection.
- Barbary Pirates captured first US vessel in 1785.
- Treaties with pirate states negotiated. Morocco 1786; Algiers 1795; Tripoli 1797; and Tunis 1797
- US paid tribute. 20% of 1800 government income paid to Barbary Pirates.

British Ship's Pass



First Barbary War

- In 1801 Pasha of Tripoli wants more tribute. Jefferson refuses. Pasha declares war on US.
- Jefferson sends squadron of new US Navy to Mediterranean.
- Navy learns how to fight. Some actions heroic, others abysmal.
- In 1805 second Treaty negotiated.
- By 1807 Algiers back to taking ships.
- US unable to respond. Difficulties with British dominate Naval affairs.

Burning of Philadelphia



Second Barbary War

- After war of 1812 over, in 1815 US sent Naval squadron to suppress Barbary Pirates.
- On way to Algiers, squadron captured Algiers 46 gun Flagship and 20 gun Brig. 500 captured.
- After persistent demands for recompensation and threats of Destruction, Dey of Algiers capitulated. Treaty accepted.
- Captured ships returned, captives exchanged, and \$10,000 paid. NO MORE TRIBUTE.

1816 British Response

- After seeing success of US, British negotiated treaties with Tunis, Tripoli, and Algiers in 1816.
- Algerian troops massacre 200 Sicilian and Corsican fisherman under British protection.
- British send diplomat backed by squadron containing five Ships of the Line, Frigates, and six Dutch warships.
- Severe Treaty proposed and rejected.
- Squadron bombards Algiers for Nine Hours.
- Next day Algiers accepts Treaty.

- Treaty signed on Sept. 24, 1816.
- 1083 slaves freed, British Consul released, US ransom money repaid. Over 3000 slaves eventually released.
- British presence in Mediterranean and advances in warship design ended reign of Barbary Pirates.
- Algiers became Colony of France in 1830.

Bombardment of Algiers



The Sea Letter

- Another document to protect neutral US ships.
- Sea Letter was issued in time of war to identify country of ship, cargo and destination.
- Congress authorized issuing Sea Letters in 1796 in response to Napoleonic wars.
- Sea Letter issued for one voyage only.
- Signed by President, Secretary of State, and issued by Collector of port.
- Letter provided some level of protection if ship stopped by warship or privateer.

Congress Authorizes Sea Letter

[PASSPORT for SHIPS of the UNITED STATES. By an act of congress passed on the first of *June* 1796, it was made the duty of the secretary of state to prepare a form, which when approved by the president, was to be deemed the form of a *Passport* for ships and vessels of the *United States*. *Sec. 1.*

The following is the form thus prepared and approved.

THOMAS JEFFERSON,

President of the United States of America,

To all who shall see these presents, GREETING:

BE IT KNOWN, That leave and permission are hereby given to ———, master or commander of the ——— called ———, of the burthen of ——— tons or thereabouts, lying at present in the port of *Philadelphia*, bound for ———, and laden with sundries

(As per Manifest)

to depart and proceed with the said ——— on his said voyage, such ——— having been visited, and the said ——— having made oath before the proper officer that the said ——— belongs to one or more of the citizens of the *United States of America*, and to him or them only.

In witness whereof, I have subscribed my name to these Presents, and affixed the Seal of the *United States of America* thereto, and caused the same to be countersigned by JOHN GRAFF, D. Collect. at *Philadelphia*, the — day of — in the year of our Lord Christ, 18—.

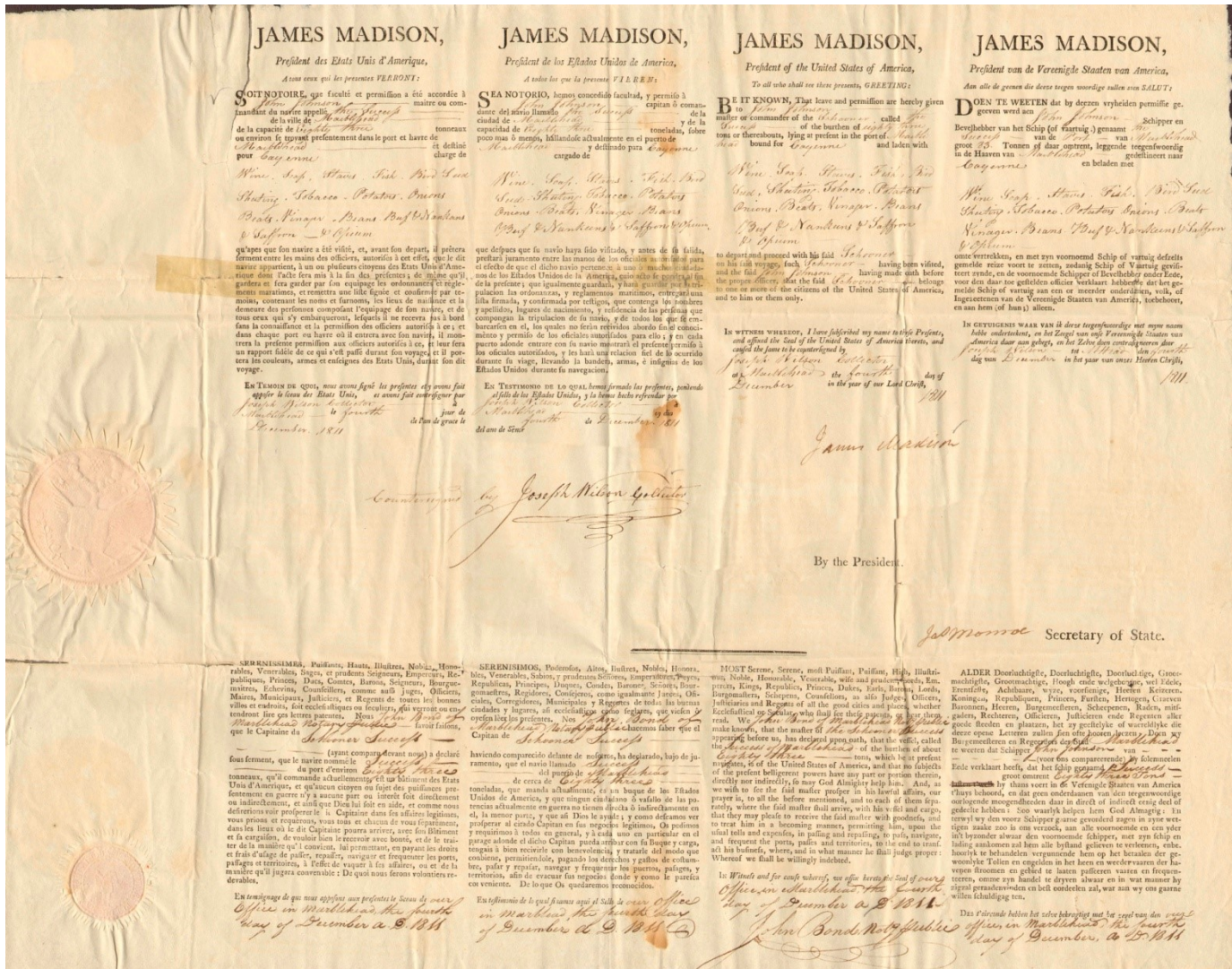
JOHN GRAFF, D. C.
W. TILTON, D. N. Off.

THOMAS JEFFERSON.

By the President.

JAMES MADDISON, *Sec. State.*

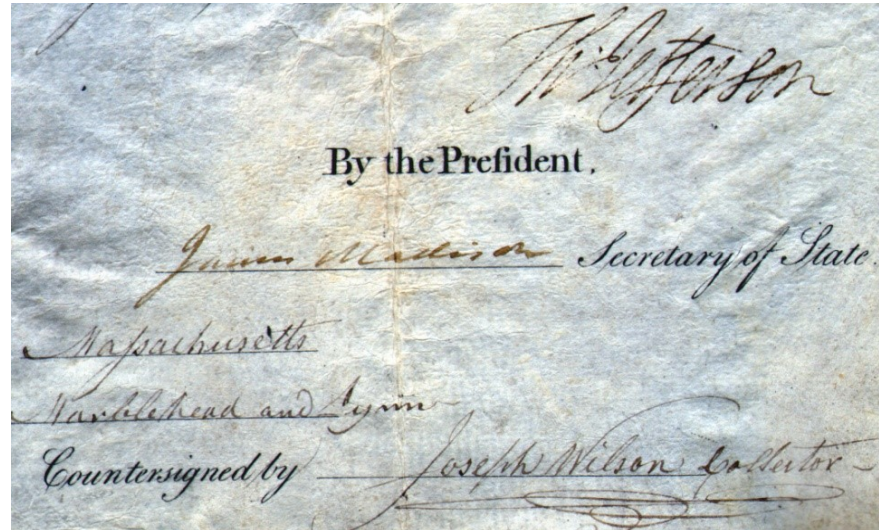
Sea Letter for Schooner "Success"



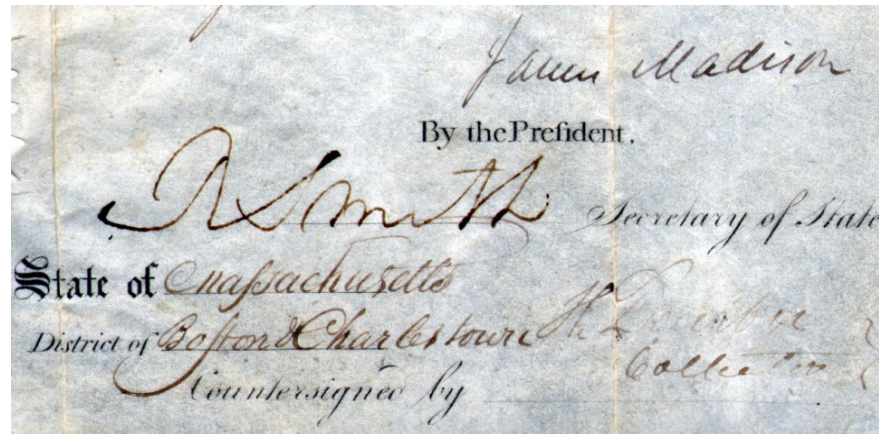
Famous Signatures

- Ships Passes and Sea Letter in MM&HS contain signatures of many important figures of US history.
- Signatures in MMHS collection include:
 - Presidents: Jefferson, Madison, Monroe, J. Q. Adams, and Jackson.
 - Secretary of State: Henry Clay

Presidential Signatures



Thomas Jefferson
By the President.
James Madison Secretary of State.
Massachusetts
Marblehead and Lynn
Countersigned by *Joseph Wilson Collector*



James Madison
By the President.
[Signature] Secretary of State
State of *Massachusetts*
District of *Boston & Charles Town*
Countersigned by *[Signature] Collector*

Presidential Signatures (Cont.)

James Monroe
By the President
John Quincy Adams Secretary of State
Massachusetts
Marblehead
Countersigned by *Joseph Wilson Colburn*

J. Q. Adams
By the President
H. Clay Secretary of State
State of
District of *Washington*
Countersigned by *Jonathan Thompson*
Colburn

Presidential Signatures (Cont.)

