

For Immediate Release

20 October 2004

Contact: Charlotte Laing: 020.7752.3121

claing@christies.com

Hannah Schmidt: 020 7752 3122

hschmidt@christies.com

**TREASURES OF THE SEA OFFERED AT CHRISTIE'S IN
NOVEMBER**



The Nature Hut, Gorgona, 1924

Montague Dawson (estimate: £40,000-60,000)



The Victoryn, circa 1760 after George Stockwell

(estimate: £100,000 – 150,000)

Maritime and Naval Battles: 10.30 am

**Maritime Pictures from the Miss Nyria M. Dawson Collection including
Important Works by Montague Dawson: 1pm**

17 November 2004

South Kensington – A veritable treasure trove of paintings and highly collectable ephemera will be offered at Christie's on 17 November 2004, in an exciting day of two sales devoted to maritime: *Maritime and Naval Battles* at 10.30am and *Maritime Pictures* at 1pm.

Appearing at auction for the first time is a collection offered from the Estate of the late Miss Nyria M. Dawson including works by Montague Dawson, her father. This collection includes twenty-three paintings by Dawson, who was the most important British maritime artist of the 20th Century. *The Nature Hut, Gorgona, 1924*, (estimate: £40,000-60,000) is a stellar example of Dawson's ability to evocatively transport the imagination, be it to the enigmatic serenity of an island or the anticipation of *Spindrift preparing to leave Foochow* (estimate: £40,000 – 60,000). Designed and built for James Findlay, *Spindrift* was Charles Connell's finest tea clipper. Had *Spindrift* not met an untimely end, when barely two years old, she would have joined *Ariel*, *Cutty Sark* and *Thermopylae* in the Pantheon of truly great clippers.

A further major work by Montague Dawson, *Thundering Along – Landfall off the Lizard* (estimate: £40,000 – 60,000) will also be offered from a private European collection. This is a dynamic depiction of the great race of 1866 between *Taeping* and *Ariel*, which is recognised to be the most memorable tea race of all. The reduced duty on imported tea, in the 1860s, led to a new fast paced, competitive generation of clipper ships which went to China in the spring and waited, in the ports, for the tea's arrival from inland. Cargoes were loaded at great speed and the long race back to London began.

An English Royal Yacht and other vessels in heavy seas, by Willem van de Velde, the younger (estimate: £60,000 - 80,000), the property of The South Street Seaport Museum New York, will be offered, as well sixty-six maritime watercolours from a private New York collection, which are expected to fetch up to £80,000.

In the *Maritime and Naval Battles* sale, collectors can look forward to *The Victory*, a unique and very fine naval dockyard model of a fully-planked boxwood and bone 80-gun frigate, circa 1760 with later completions. It is likely that this exquisite example of craftsmanship, which has been in a private family collection since the 1830's, originates from George Stockwell's workshops. The fully planked hull and fine employment of bone throughout is comparable to models such as the *Leopard* in the Pitt Rivers Museum, Oxford and even the coppered example of *Bellona* in the National Maritime Museum.

A fascinating piece of history will also be offered, a deck chair from the R.M.S. *Lusitania* (estimate: £2,000 - 4,000), which was infamously torpedoed on the 7 May 1915. Taking almost 1,200 souls down with her, 134 of whom were American, this incident changed the course of The Great War, directly leading to the United States of America losing her neutrality.

Admiral John Elphinstone's personal log book from Spithead to Chesme Bay, observing the Russian squadron's victory over the Turkish fleet at the Battle of Chios in 1770 (estimate: £1,000 - 1,500) is just one of a variety of other tempting lots. An attractive deck-head light fitting from R.M.S. *Olympic* (estimate: £600 - 800) and an ornate, late Victorian, carved mahogany dressing table believed to be from the king's cabin of the royal racing yacht *Britannia* (estimate: £2,000 - 4,000) will also be offered.

###

Images available on request
Visit Christie's at www.christies.com

Notes to Editors:

Sale: Christie's South Kensington, Wednesday 17 November 2004

- Maritime and Naval Battles: 10.30 am
- Maritime Pictures: 1pm

Viewing Times:

- Sunday 14 November 1pm - 4pm
- Monday 15 November 9am - 7.30pm
- Tuesday 16 November 9am - 5pm

The proceeds from the collection of Dawson "family" paintings will be donated to The Royal National Lifeboat Institution, The Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals and The Tall Ships Youth Trust.

Christie's is the world market leader in the fields of *Maritime Pictures* and *Maritime Collectibles*. Sales are held in Spring and Autumn in both London and New York featuring oil paintings, watercolours and prints, as well as ship's fittings, carvings and figureheads, instruments, models and ephemera. World auction records established by Christie's include £663,750 for *A 1:48 scale-gun navy board model of an unrigged English two-deck Fifth Rate, circa.1710-1724* (November 2003) and £172,000 for John Wilson Carmichael's *A sleek-hulled British Opium Schooner amongst other shipping, including fine-lined Chinese deep water junks and a large British man-o'-war under sail, off what is presumed to be Hong Kong from 1843* (November 1997). In October 2005, Christie's London will hold *The Trafalgar Sale*, which commemorates 200 years since the glorious battle