Watercolour of the Captain's Cabin on HMS Monarch

£390

Christopher Clarke Antiques
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REF: 82638

Height: 22.85 cm (9")

Width: 13.96 cm (5.5")

Description

Pair of Watercolours of the Captain's Cabin, HMS Monarch.

A pair of small, amateur watercolours on one piece of paper annotated to the reverse in pencil with 'Captain's Sleeping Cabin H.M.S. Monarch - Portsmouth - 8th November 1875' and 'Captain's Sitting Cabin H.M.S. Monarch - Portsmouth - 8th & 9th November 1875'.

To the front they are both initialled 'E.I.H.' to the bottom left-hand corner. The artist is likely to be Emily Isabel Hood, the daughter of HMS Monarch's Captain. Emily would have been 15 years old at the time and perhaps painted the pictures to occupy herself whilst her father, who is pictured at his desk, was busy with paperwork.

Captain Arthur William Acland Hood (later 1st Baron Hood of Avalon) came from a famous naval family. He took command of HMS Monarch on the 10th of June 1874 and held the position until the 22nd of March 1876 when he was promoted to Rear Admiral. The ship had just been refitted and under his command was part of the Channel Squadron.

The picture of Hood's Sleeping cabin shows a swinging cot bed with drawers underneath. Behind the bed there looks to be a built-in cupboard or possible a linen press. It is unclear whether the bed is the full width of the cabin and against the bulkhead or can be passed at its foot. A swinging tray shelf is also shown, a full coal scuttle and a balloon back chair which it would be nice to think is by Ross & Co. The Sitting Cabin painting shows the Captain with his mutton chop whiskers sat on a balloon back chair at his desk, which has misjudged proportions. There are scattered papers on the desk and a gimballed lamp above. The room also has a round tripod table, two easy chairs and what might be a campaign chest with cupboard super structure. There is not enough detail to be sure if it is or not.

These two paintings were probably considered unimportant at the time they were made but they give us a good insight to the Captain's accommodation on board a Victorian iron hull ship that bridged the change from sail to steam power and broadside armament to mounted turrets. They also have the naivety of a daughter occupying herself by painting her father at work. Dated 8th and 9th November 1875.

Joint image size is given.

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