



Needle Craft Naval Picture, Sailors Maritime Woolwork, Sailors Woolies

Sold



REF: 28136

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 three large Royal Navy steam ships, one small Navy steam ship and one sail ship. The sail ship is flying the 'Red Ensign' (Red Duster) whilst the others are flying the 'White Ensigns' (St George's Ensign). In the background on the left is a fort flying the Union flag and on the right is a windmill. It appears the Navy first used steam ships around 1824, but they were in more general use after the 1850's. They were under steam only near land and used the sails in the open ocean. 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.