

18th Century Material Culture A Living Historian's Journey L'Hermione 2015 - Part I





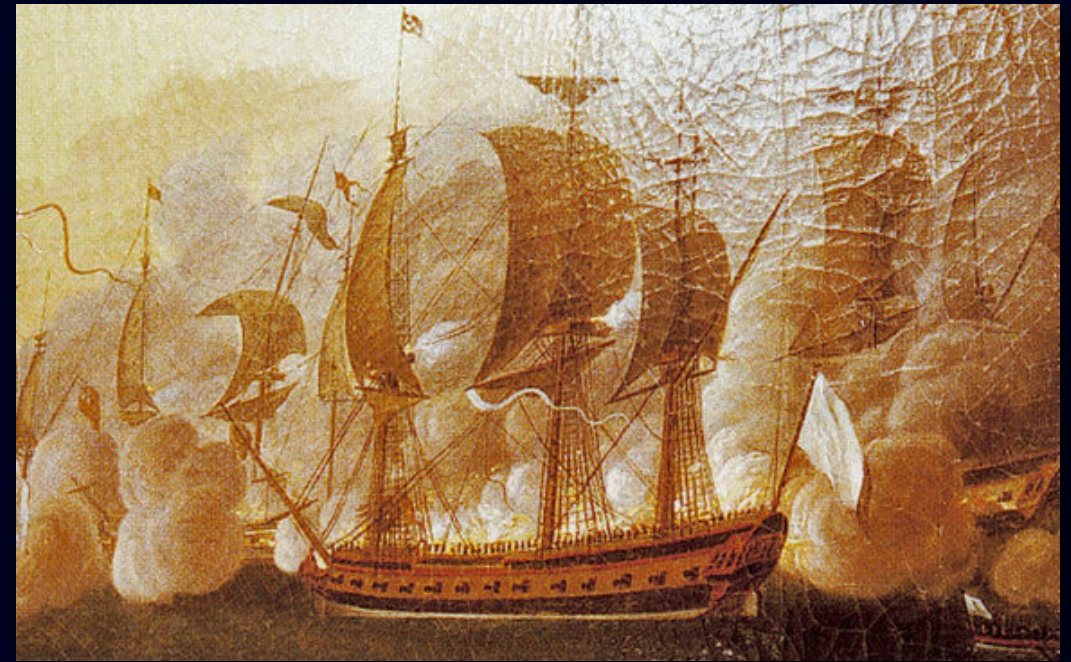
Marie Joseph Paul Yves Roch Gilbert Motier, Marquis De Lafayette
by Charles Wilson Peale c. 1779 - 1780
(Independence National Historic Park)

On April 28, 1780, 22-year-old Marie Joseph Paul Yves Roch Gilbert Motier, Marquis De Lafayette landed in Boston, Massachusetts, aboard the French frigate Hermione. Bringing with him news that France would support the American cause in her drawn out War for Independence, he was met with a grand celebration. In detailing his arrival, The Massachusetts Spy reported on May 4th that Lafayette was enthusiastically received at the pier by “a large number of respectable gentlemen, with a number of officers of the army, attended with the band of music”. Once on land, he was escorted to his lodgings, “amidst the salutations of cannon, the ringing of bells, the flying of colours, and the acclamations of the populace”

L'Hermione was a Concorde Class Light (Légère) Frigate of the French Navy. She was built in 11 months at Rochefort, Charente-Maritime, France under shipwright Henri Chevillard.

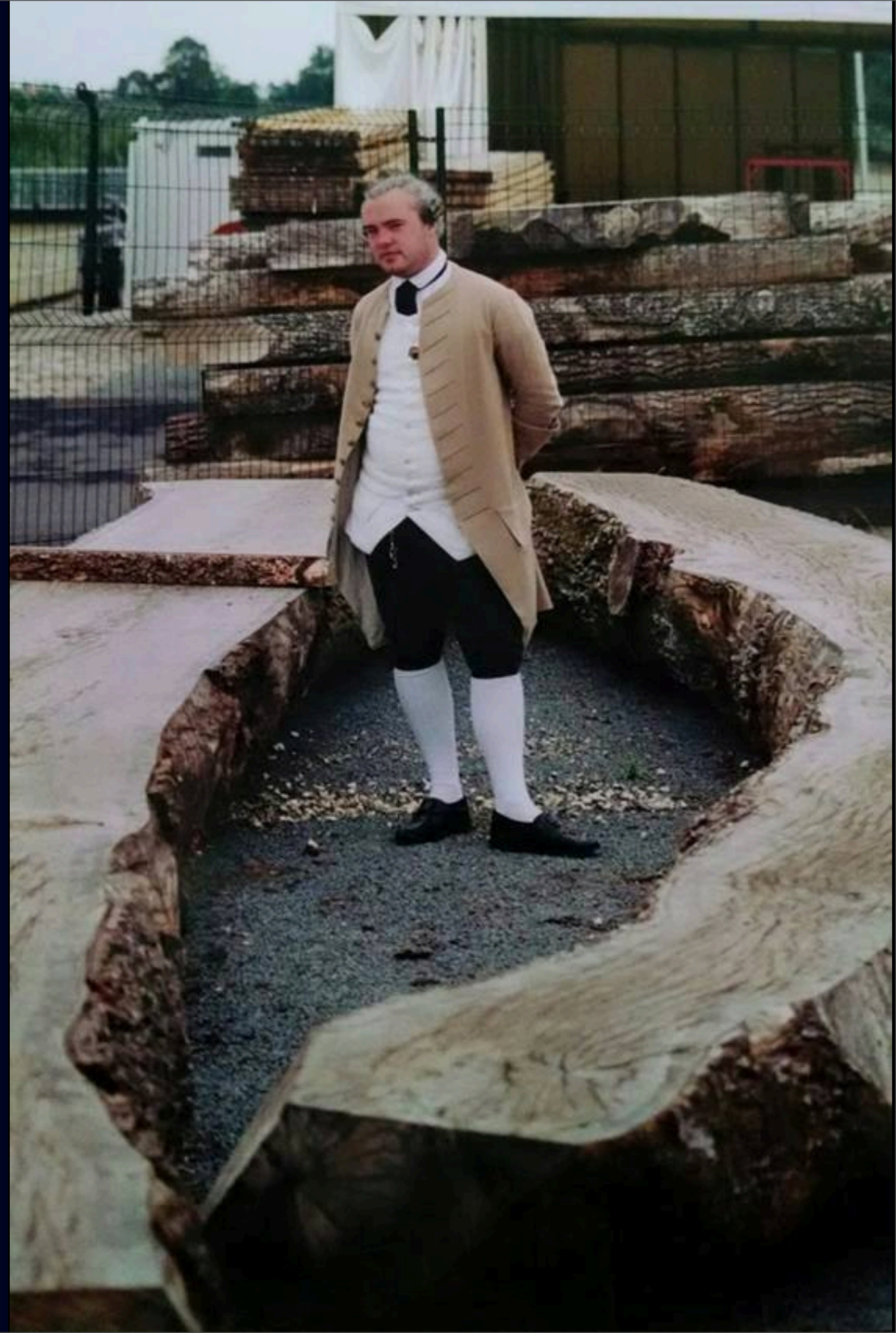
After delivering Lafayette to America, L'Hermione sailed to Penobscot Bay for military intelligence after which time she sailed to Rhode Island. She suffered severe damage on June 7th, 1781 when she encountered the H.M.S. Iris under the command of James Hawker. After fighting in the naval battle off Cape Breton on the 21st of July, 1781, where she and the frigate L'Astrée defeated a British convoy of 18 ships, she returned home to France in February of 1782.

L'Hermione met her fate during action against the British on the 20th of September, 1783. Running aground, she was destroyed by heavy seas.

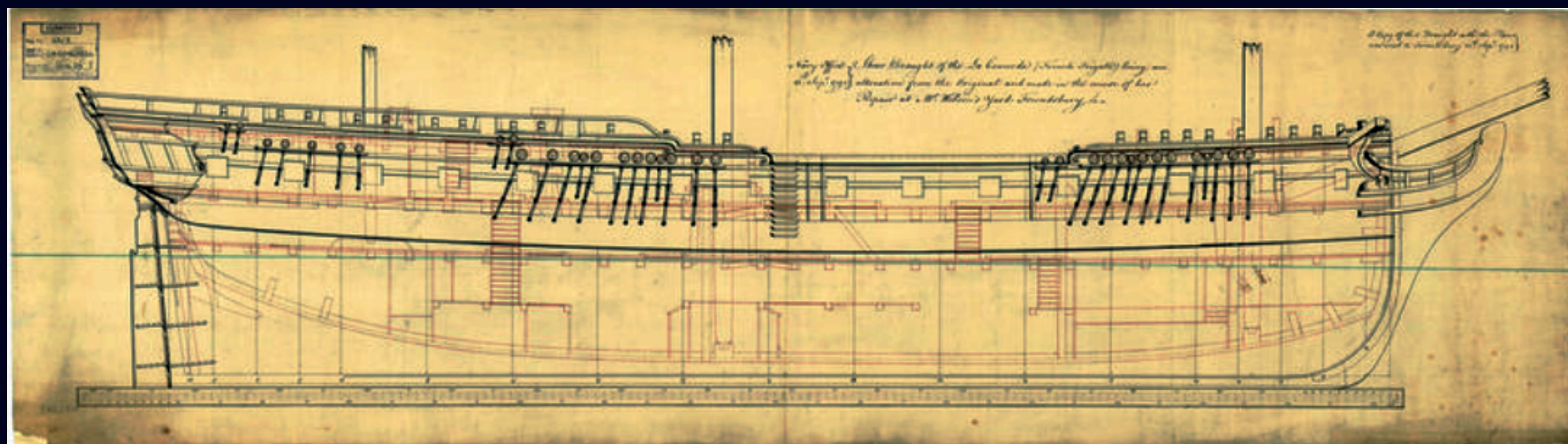
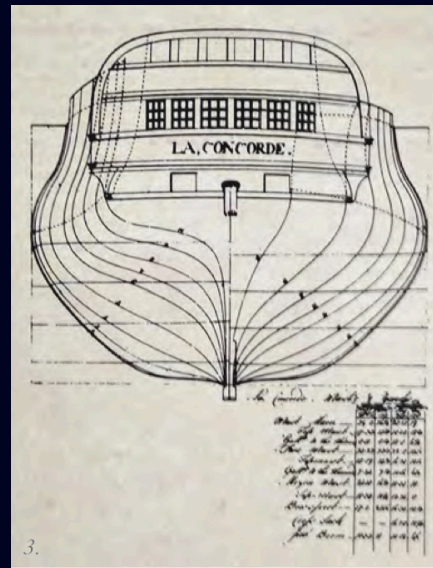


L'Hermoine in Combat off Cape Breton 21, July, 1781
The Battle of Louisbourg
by Auguste - Louis de Rossel de Cercey
(Private Collection)

In 1997, plans to reconstruct L'Hermione and recreate her pivotal role in history and the Franco - American alliance began in Rochefort, Charente-Maritime, France where the original Hermione was constructed. Taking over 17 years to complete, she is one of the most historically accurate recreations of an 18th Century frigate known to exist.



One of the initial obstacles facing the reconstruction of L'Hermione was the lack of original plans for the vessel. As fate would have it, the British would come to the rescue. Within the collections of the National Maritime Museum are plans drawn up in 1783 by the British Admiralty for L'Hermione's sister ship, La Concorde. Also built in Rochefort, France, between 1777 - 1778 by the shipwright, Henri Chevillard. La Concorde was captured by the H.M.S. Magnificent in 1783.

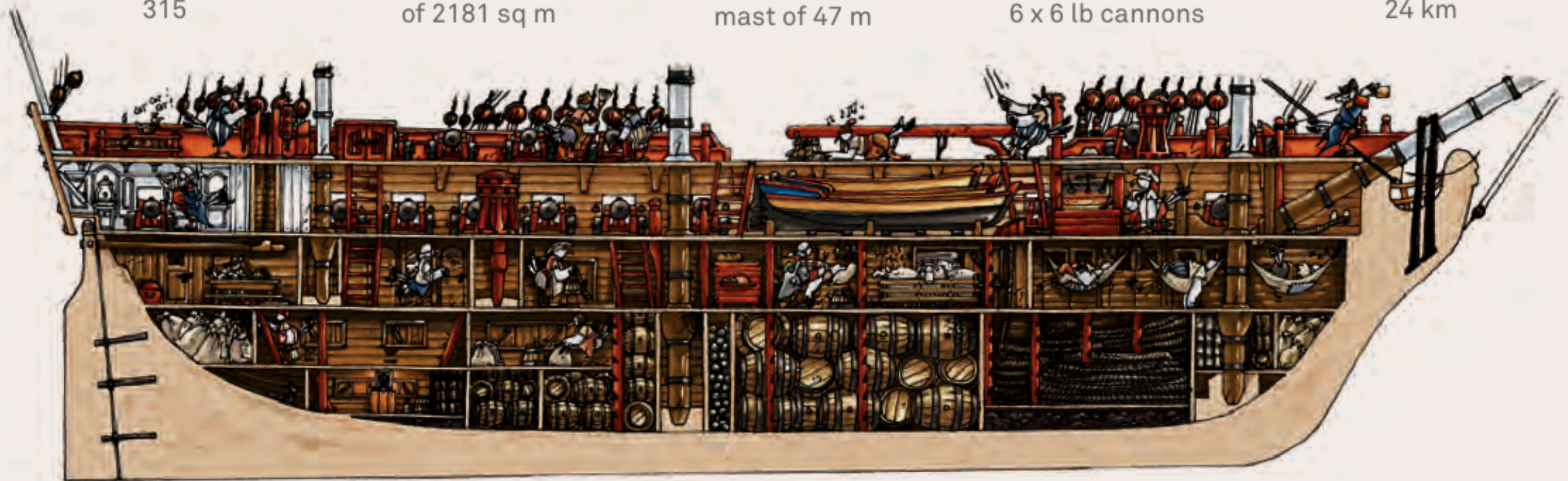


Plans for the Captured Ship “La Concorde” 1783 (National Maritime Museum)

L'Hermione

VITAL STATISTICS

LAUNCHED	LOST AT SEA	DISPLACEMENT	DRAUGHT	LENGTH OVERALL	BEAM
1779	1793	116 tns	5.78 m	65 m	11.22 m
—	—	—	—	—	—
CREW COMPLEMENT	SAILS	MASTS	GUNNERY	RIGGING ROPES	
315	19 with an area of 2181 sq m	3, with a main mast of 47 m	26 x 12lb cannons 6 x 6 lb cannons	24 km	





Reconstructing L'Hermione - Rochefort, France



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Although the reconstruction of L'Hermione began in 1997, we here at The 18th Century Material Culture Resource Center did not actually hear about this amazing project until the summer of 2014. While attending a juried living history event at Fort Ticonderoga, New York, our friend and file partner at the time, Adam Hodges - Leclaire, a young history major from Boston enrolled at the University of St. Andrews in Scotland, was beaming with excitement as he informed us all of the recreated Hermione and his desire to crew her during the vessel's epic transatlantic journey in 2015.



Adam Hodges - LeClaire
Departing Logan International Airport for France
March 8, 2015

Despite his young age, Adam Hodges - LeClaire is one of the most respected individuals within the “Progressive” living history community.

Having had his application to sail aboard L'Hermione accepted, Adam was the **ONLY** individual on board the functioning tall ship to authentically dress as a 18th century French sailor during her entire voyage. He did this from his departure from Boston to France on March 8, 2015, while crossing the Atlantic to the United States from April 18th to June 5th, and during his journey up the eastern seaboard of the United States from Yorktown, Virginia, until he reached his final destination at Lunenburg, Nova Scotia, on July 18th.



Teaching the Public & Chatting with Friends in Boston Before Departing for France - March 7, 2015
Later that Evening, Some Would Fall in the Bloody Incident on King Street



Living the Life of an 18th Century Sailor

It goes without saying that we in the living history community are extremely proud of Adam's accomplishments. We cannot think of a better individual to represent our avocation as L'Hermione was exposed to the world through international media coverage.

Eager to greet L'Hermione and her returning son in much the same fashion that the Marquis de Lafayette was greeted in 1780, plans began to be made in Boston by the living history community once it became apparent that this epic voyage would occur. It was an experience that none of us would likely forget.



Destination: America

Leaving France on 18 April, 2015, L'Hermione crossed the Atlantic Ocean and arrived at Yorktown, Virginia, on the 5th of June. It was here that the French alliance during the American War for Independence led to the surrender of Lord Cornwallis and the British army on 19 October, 1781. Over the next month and a half, L'Hermione would sail up the eastern seaboard and dock at 11 additional ports along the way. With great pomp and circumstance during her entire voyage, she ended her American tour at Lunenburg, Nova Scotia, on the 19th of July. From here, she proudly returned to France.



France: Preparing for the *Voyage*







Educating the French Public on the Life of a Sailor





























18 avril Le Grand départ
2015

L'Hermione

Port des Barques • Fouras-les-Bains • Ile d'Aix • St Laurent de la Prée • St-Nazaire sur Charente



The Trans - Atlantic Voyage



















Yorktown Virginia





























Alexandria Virginia



Hermione Visits Alexandria

CELEBRATE WITH SPECIAL EVENTS JUNE 5 - 14

RESTAURANT OFFERINGS | DOCKSIDE ACTIVITIES

DOCKSIDE JUNE 10-12

FOR MORE INFO: VisitAlexandriaVA.com/HERMIONE

Burke &
Herbert
Bank

CELEBRATING
Alexandria

Hermione
1790-1990









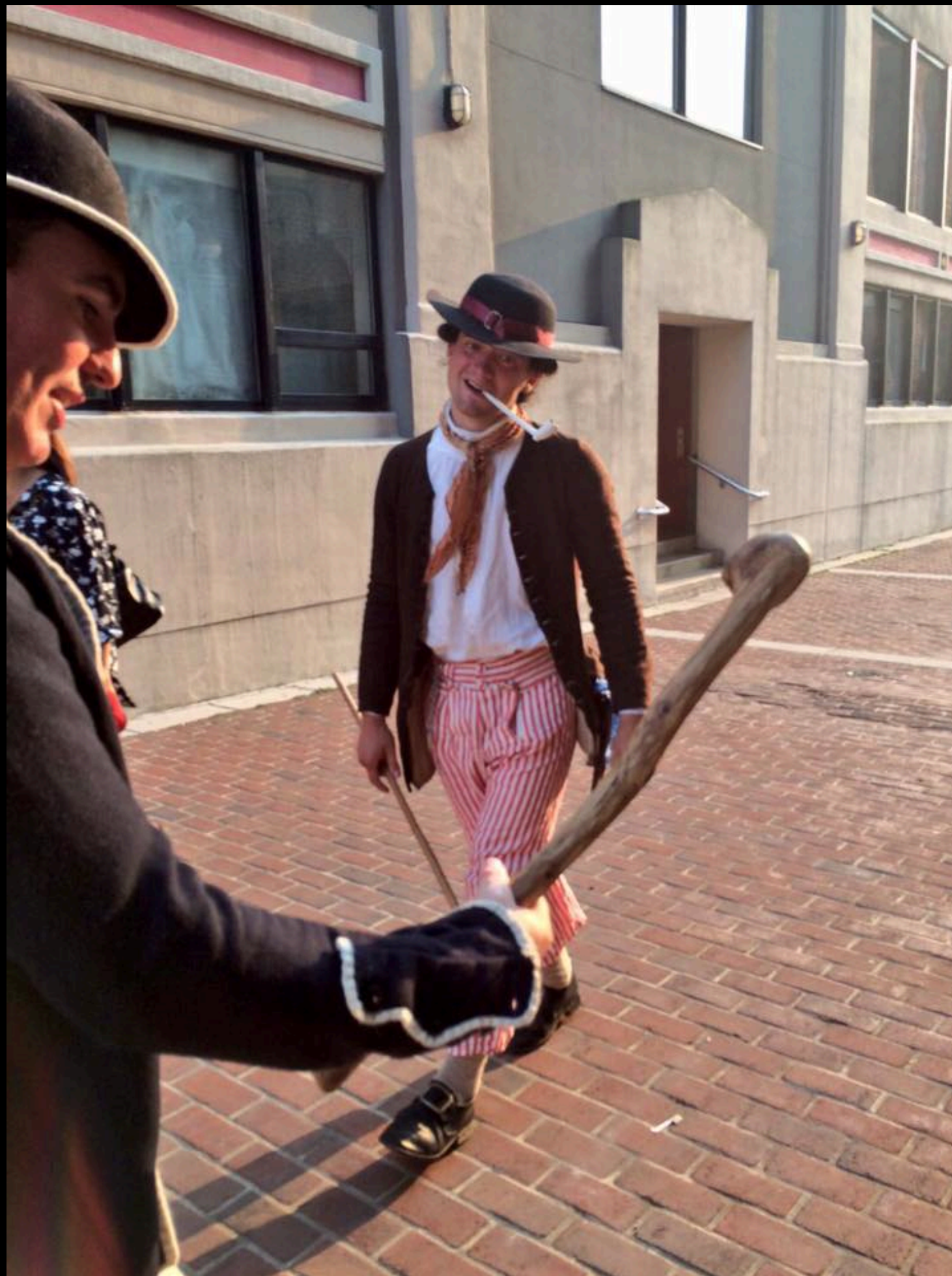
















Constitution
ROCHEFORT FRANCE
1780 Constructed in France
600 shipwrights
1797-2016 Constructed in 17 years
150 shipwrights
FUNDING 34 million \$
60% donors & MEMBERS
30% BRICA COMPANIES
10% SPONSORING

VOYAGE
1780 350 PERSONS
2016 75 CREW
- 12 PRO'S
- 24 VOLUNTEERS
Average age 27
Number of days for the voyage
- Atlantic 35 days
- Today 34 days
(Not taking the same route)

Cruise 1
Potomac River to
Mount Vernon Estate

















OK

Those were pretty Badass...



Annapolis Maryland

























Baltimore Maryland











































ermione

CANOT LAFAYETTE







Philadelphia Pennsylvania















Properly Educating the Public...
It's Our Responsibility



New York
New York



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More +

Replica of historic war ship Hermione docks in New York



JULY 4, 2015, 8:26 AM | America's Revolutionary War was raging 235 years ago when Marquis de Lafayette sailed from France aboard the Navy frigate Hermione to deliver good news to his friend George Washington. On this Independence Day, a replica of the famous ship is in New York City as part of the Fourth of July celebrations. David Begnaud reports.





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Newport Rhode Island





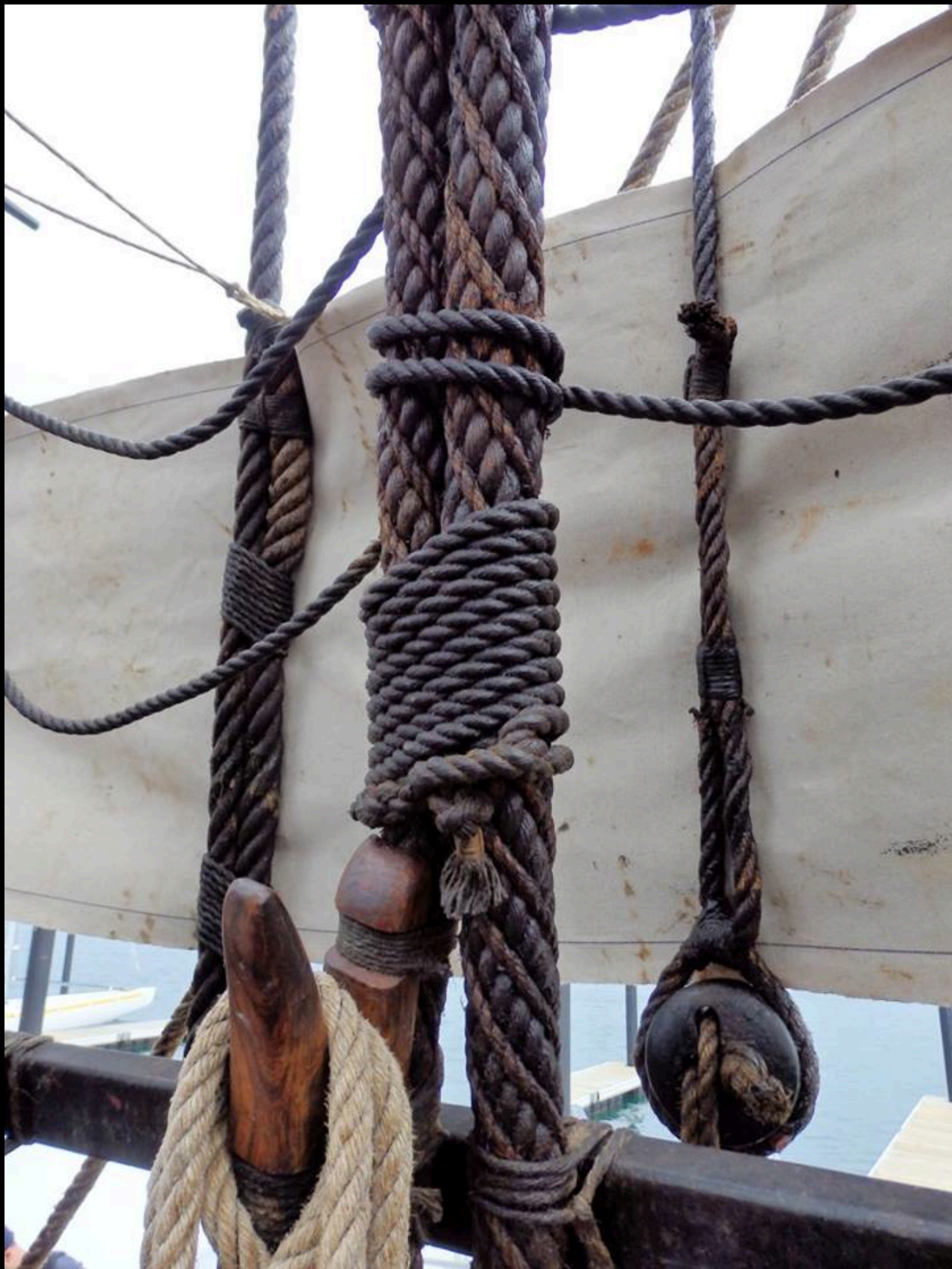
























To Be Continued...

To Continue L'Hermione's Voyage up the Eastern Seaboard of the United States, see...

18th Century Material Culture A Living Historian's Journey L'Hermione 2015 - Part II



Acknowledgements

This presentation would not have been possible without the help of our many friends who generously contributed their outstanding photographs. It is with sincere appreciation that we extend our gratitude to:

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It also goes without saying that none of this would have been possible without the tremendous effort of the living history community throughout the eastern seaboard of the United States.

Our sincere compliments to you all and THANK YOU all for your efforts!

- The 18th Century Material Culture Resource Center