JOHN BENNETT fine paintings

The Foudroyant, commanded by Sir John Jervis, bringing the Pégase, a French 74, into Portsmouth

DOMINIC SERRES

£ POA

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Description

DOMINIC SERRES R.A.1719-1793English SchoolThe Foudroyant, commanded by Sir John Jervis, bringing the Pégase, a French 74, into PortsmouthOil on canvas, signed and dated 179*122.5 x 183.5 cms48¼ x 721/4 ins Exhibited Royal Academy 1793 no. 126Literature: Alan Russet – Dominic Serres, R.A., 1719-1793; War Artist to the Navy (pages 148-151, 158, 210)Provenance: John Jervis, Admiral of the Fleet and 1st Earl of St Vincent (1734-1823).
Edward Jervis, 2nd Viscount St Vincent (1767-1859).
Carnegie Robert Jervis, 3rd Viscount St Vincent (1825-1879).
John Leveson Jervis, 4th Viscount St Vincent (1850-1885).
Carnegie Parker Jervis, 5th Viscount St Vincent (1855-1908).
Ronald Clarges Jervis, 6th Viscount St Vincent (1859-1940).
Ronald James Jervis, 7th Viscount St Vincent (1905-2006).
Edward Jervis, 8th Viscount St Vincent (1951-2023), and thence by descent In his book, Dominic Serres, R.A., 1719-1793; War Artist to the Navy, Alan Russet writes on page 149 about an earlier, un-exhibited painting of the same subject produced in 1782 which measures 30 x 44 inches. This painting is now in the collection of the Art Gallery of South Australia. He states that: “The return to Portsmouth with a ship-of-the-line as a prize was an occasion for great celebration. Serres does full justice to the occasion by bringing the subject close to the picture plane, clearly showing the figurehead, and animating the scene with foreground figures. Serres’s second son, Dominique Michael, served briefly as an Able Seaman on Foudroyant during the summer of 1782.”THE FOUDROYANT AND PEGASEThe Pégase was captured by the Royal Navy in 21st April 1782 in what became known as the third Battle of Ushant. This series of naval engagements between Britain and France was part of the American Revolutionary War with the two European super powers in conflict over influence and control of the Americas. Pégase was a 74-gun warship and in the painting it is apparent that she suffered damage in the battle having lost her topsails and with shot holes in the side. The King’s Colours fly above the white flag of surrender and the naval oarsmen in the boat abreast of the stern are carrying senior navy officers.The 80-gun Foudroyant - a Third Rate vessel in that she carried between 64 and 80 guns arrayed over two decks - was ironically, also originally a French ship having been built at Toulon. It was designed by François Coulomb and was launched on 18th December 1750 and saw action on several occasions before being captured by the British at the Battle of Cartagena on 28th February 1758 off the coast of Spain while under the command of the Marquis de Quesne. It was towed to Gibraltar for repairs and then sailed to Portsmouth with the French crew on board who had survived the battle. Upon docking at Portsmouth, the French ordinary seamen were imprisoned in Porchester Castle, the officers in Maidstone except for the Marquis and other captains who were given more preferential treatment.The Admiralty inspection approved the purchase of the ship on 6th December 1758 for £16,759 19 shillings and eleven pence and she officially entered the service of...

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