

Scottish Silver & Applied Arts (568)

Wed, 14th Aug 2019, Edinburgh

Viewing Times:

Sun 11th August 12 noon -4pm

Mon 12th August 10am - 5pm

Tue 13th August 10am - 5pm

Day of sale from 9am



Lot 197

Estimate: £1500 - £2000 + Fees

A MODEL OF A SINGLE SCREW STEAMER GOTHLAND 1932

built by A. J. Berry-Robinson for Mr W. Adams, the ship supplied to Builders H. Robb Ltd., Dundee, contained in a brass framed display case with engraved plaque with details, the hull stiffened for use in icy waters

79cm model length

Note: Built at Henry Robb Shipyards and ordered by The Currie Line, the Gothland weighed 1286 tons, and was launched in March 1932. With a length of 250 feet, the ship was primarily used on the Leith to Hamburg route in peacetime. In 1940 she was taken over by the Ministry of Defence. SS Gothland was in convoy rescue service sailing with 41 convoys and rescued 149 seamen. This service came about when it was noticed no provisions had been made for the rescue of sailors from sunk or damaged ships. Cargo vessels were converted to hold around 150 people, with larger catering and storage facilities for supplies, and basic medical services along with AA guns. Although they were supplying a rescue service, they were still a target, unlike Hospital ships. Gothland was also useful in the North Atlantic as her hull had been strengthened for working in icy waters. Before being demobilised after the end of hostilities, she came back to the yard for inspection. To the satisfaction of the owners and the firm of Henry Robb it was found that after a prolonged period of excessive strain, the hull showed no sign of any structural defects, and the worst that could be found was a few slack rivets, a real testament to the shipbuilders who built her.

The ship was sold to Claymore Shipping London in 1958 and renamed 'Asrar'. In 1984 Henry Robb ran out of orders and closed in early 1984, ending over 600 years of shipbuilding in Leith. The land once occupied by Robb's shipyard is now the Ocean Terminal shopping centre, home to the Royal Yacht Britannia.

These model ships (Lots 197-199) and paintings (lots 200-204) form part of a collection, of which the remaining examples will be included in the Five Centuries sale on September 4th 2019. They formed an all-round display in the previous owner's home which had a wide view over the Forth, underlining his interest in the sea, shipbuilding and ships. There is a surprising contrast between the finely detailed and accurately rendered ships models in the collection and the group of paintings by Malcolm Cheape which are quite free in their execution. Cheape however was also keen to research his subject thoroughly, not only in the configuration of the ships but also in the accuracy of the surroundings into which they are set.

Cheape graduated from Duncan of Jordanstone College of

Art, Dundee in 1987 and has worked widely in Scotland and London ever since. His subject matter is drawn almost exclusively from the sea. His distinctive style combines paint, ink, pencil marks, paper and tape and are multi-layered pieces that are held in a number of private and public collections.

William Adam, who commissioned these works was Leith born and bred and wanted to own scale models of the ships that he knew. He met Alan Berry-Robinson in London in 2008 and commissioned a model of SS Gothland in 2009, shortly followed by SS Pharos and SS Sunniva in 2010. All were built in the builder's-model style with gilded/silvered deck fittings on a carved timber hull, from original plans and photographs and, of course, Bill's memory. The last commission was for MS Hubert in 2015.

Alan Berry-Robinson has been restoring and building ship models for the past 30 years for dealers, private collectors and Museums in the UK and overseas.