

SA1180979

17th-Century Marine Battle Painting, Isaac Sailmaker (Circle), An English Warship Engaging Barbary Corsairs

Price

Sold**Item Reference: SA1180979****Date of manufacture: 17th Century**

Dimensions

Height = 103 cm (40.6")

Width = 162 cm (63.8")

Depth = 7 cm (2.8")

Description

This large and imposing late 17th-century oil painting depicts several British ships defeating the notorious Barbary Corsairs. Amid the smoke, burning wreckage and carnage of a sinking pirate ship, the British ensign flutters triumphantly, as a small crew approaches to imprison survivors. It's a particularly rose-tinted portrayal of one of the many grisly battles occurring with a formidable enemy at this time. The Barbary Corsairs were predominantly based in the North African ports of Tripoli, Tunis and Algiers, and frequently undertook raids against Europe, capturing thousands of slaves. They were comprised of both local and international privateers, including Britons. One such raid, in 1645, saw them overwhelm the Cornish coastline and return with 240 villagers. They relied upon guile, expertise, speed and deception, often sailing under false colours when approaching merchant ships. Throughout the 17th century, they were a terrifying prospect. Following the restoration of Charles II in 1660, the King instructed the Royal Navy to mount an extended campaign against this long-standing foe, which was both bloody and costly. He appointed his brother, James (Duke of York,...

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