

Basic Detail Report

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Title

The Ship TORRIDON of Aberdeen, 1502 Tons: W. Shepherd, Commander

Date

1888

Primary Maker

William Forster

Medium

Watercolour on paper

Dimensions

Mount: 630 x 867 mm Sight: 438 x 642 mm

Name

Painting

History

The TORRIDON was a clipper ship for the Australia-UK run built in Aberdeen, Scotland in 1885 at 1502 tons. The painting is signed in the bottom left corner W Forster 1888. The artist William Forster was born in England in 1851. He went to New Zealand in 1871 and began working as a marine artist. Around 1880 he came to Sydney where he painted ships and yachts in Sydney Harbour and Newcastle, producing a prolific number over the next decade. Forster catered to a well defined market using the conventions common to professional ship-portraitists - usually presenting a broadside view of the vessel with a recognisable landmark such as South Head in the background and one or two smaller vessels. He usually included the ship's flags. He always worked in watercolour. His brushwork was distinctively delicate and the detail was technically of a high standard. He died in 1891. The ship was also painted also by A V Gregory (State Library Victoria Image No. a25392) and several photographs of the TORRIDON are held at the State Library of Victoria. The ANMM also has a photograph (image No. P.6473). A watercolour of the TORRIDON by Jack Spurling appears in *Sail, The Romance of the Clipper Ships*, Vol. II, 1929. The donor Roderick Winchcombe Glassford (1920-1995) commenced work with Macdonald Hamilton & Co, agents for P&O in the 1930s. During World War Two he served in the Coast Artillery at South Head, achieving the rank of Captain. He returned to work with Macdonald Hamilton and became a Passenger Superintendent with P&O. Deeply interested in maritime history, Glassford owned a yacht and was a prolific collector of objects and books. With the decline in passenger ships from the 1970s, he managed the Art Gallery society and was involved in early efforts to form the first Sydney Maritime Museum.