

MURAL and MAP at the SEAMEN'S CHURCH INSTITUTE

MURAL - Mounted in foyer of the Seamen's Church Institute is William Holland Drury's (1888-1960 - marine etcher) dramatic 1930 square mural depicting Narragansett Bay in the format of an antique chart, embellished with symbols of his personal life and historic episodes on the Bay. The mural was donated by the Goddard family, and it is from the recollections of the artist's daughter, Hope Drury Goddard, and grandson, Thomas P. I. Goddard that the following explanation of the symbols is derived.

Some images are readily identifiable, such as Arthur Curtiss James's globe circling ship, *Aloha*. The James and Goddard families were close friends afloat and ashore, the wives having especial appreciation for gardens and horticulture. Also present is the battleship *U.S.S. New York* (identified via her code flags by her official publication *The Knickerbocker*) which relates to Drury's naval service in WWI as well as the traditional naval presence in Newport - appropriate, also, respecting the role of SCI as a "Haven for all men and women of the sea." The Grand Banks fishing schooner towing a dory, according to the family, stems from Drury's love of the Banks and fishing. Interpolation from his etchings of watercolors of a fisherman and captain, for which he used Ted Sturtevant as a model, suggests that the schooner and dory are an allegory for the father/daughter relationship. His long tenure as head of the Art Department of St. George's School is symbolized by the Cross of St. George on Aquidneck Island where the school is located.

More concealed is the inscription on the Narragansett shore "41degs. 31' N. Lat. - 71degs 23' W. Lo." inasmuch as the intersection of the coordinates lies across the West Passage on the shore of Conanicut Island. Perhaps by way of artistic license Drury chose to offset it where there is more space in the mural and to steer the observer to the actual location by elongating the eastern part of the parallel of latitude in the direction of the Island. Tom Goddard notes "This is not a miscalculation given my grandfather's navigation skills. In fact, he taught navigation at the Naval Station in Newport during WWII. The only passing grade in his course was 100% because, as he told his students, 'it won't do any good to keep 90% of your vessel off the rocks.'"

In fact, the coordinates mark a tiny inlet a few hundred yards north of the entrance to the Great Creek and Round Swamp. Hope Goddard recalls as a youngster traversing across Jamestown from Potter's Cove by a canoe or rowboat via this water course by entering it in the vicinity of where the toll booths for the Newport Bridge currently exist in order to land in the minute cove at "41degs. 31' N. - 71 degs. 23' W." and visit the Wright family on their farm. For verification of the plausibility of this track shift from the Mural, one can refer to the 1860 Map that belonged to SCI's board member Hugh D. Auchincloss III's great uncle John and is displayed at the Institute. The image and inscription confirm the "*Proposed Canal*" extending from the Swamp to the Creek; contemplate what it would be like today were the Island divided into upper and lower Conanicut and connected by yet another toll bridge!

MAP - A rare 1860 map of Aquidneck Island contains names of plot owners as well as designations for the Old Colony Railroad and Ocean Drive, marked with the caption "to be built." When owned by John Auchincloss (1810-1876), a successful New York merchant who built a summer house in the Point section of Newport, the map had been mounted as separate pieces on a linen backing in order to be folded as a portable travel map. It was later reassembled in one piece for display purposes by the Northeast Documentation Center in Andover MA, and donated to the Seamen's Church Institute by Hugh D. "Yusha" Auchincloss III in 2005 in honor of Henry H. "Harry" Anderson, Jr., a Seamen's Trustee, in the Library named after him.