

JOHN MITCHELL

FINE PAINTINGS



John Thomas Serres (1759 - 1825)

A Frigate leaving Plymouth Sound, with other Vessels nearby

pencil, pen and grey ink and watercolour

This drawing epitomizes Serres' accuracy in matters nautical and topographical: the ship may represent the 38-gun HMS Clyde on which Serres spent time with the Channel Fleet at the end of 1799 and in the summer of 1800, when he made a continuous panorama of the entire Biscay coast from Brest to El Ferrol, now preserved in the UK Hydrographic Office. The latter, together with Serres' important surveying work for the Admiralty during the blockade of Brest, form the subject of a fascinating book (see above) by Michael Barritt, to whom I am grateful for identifying the landmarks in this drawing. Just to the right of the frigate's stern is Mount Edgcumbe House; to the right again, a ship is seen at anchor in the Barn Pool. Drake's (or St Nicholas') Island is shown in transit with The Narrows, with vessels laid up in the Hamoaze beyond.

Provenance:

Sir Bruce Ingram;
with John Appleby, London and Jersey.

Literature:

M.K.Barritt, *Eyes of the Admiralty, J.T.Serres, An Artist in the Channel Fleet, 1799-1800*, (2008);
Alan Russett, *John Thomas Serres 1759-1825 The Tireless Enterprise of a Marine Artist*, (2010)