

II.

OLD IRONSIDES

In this well-regarded early silent naval epic, **Ole Ironsides**, a young scallywag goes t' sea only t' be taken captive by th' notorious pirates o' th' **Barbary Coast** in th' **Mediterranean**. Th' doughty American warship **USS Constitution** battles th' pirates 'n prevails! Based loosely on a real American naval war off **Libya** fought in 1804 'n 1805, th' film was shot in Californian waters off th' coast o' **Catalina Island** 'n employed two real nineteenth century vessels, destroyin' one onscreen!

Th' production was nah a box-office success 'n, unsurprisingly, ran well o'er budget, but be well regarded today among silent movie buffs. Th' **Constitution** would go on t' make her name - 'n t' achieve her nickname, **Ole Ironsides**, used anachronistically in th' title o' this film - in th' War o' 1812 when she defeated th' larger 'n better-armed British vessel **HMS Guerriere**, an event which helped t' turn th' tide o' war in **America's** favor.

John Tayloe IV, son o' John Tayloe III, ancestor t' several close friends o' yer Captain here afore ye, was a midshipman aboard th' **Constitution** durin' said battle 'n was severely wounded, endin' his naval career shortly thereafter. Twas t' **Virginia** legislature awarded 'im a sword in commemoration o' th' event, 'n t' blade be currently displayed at th' **Octagon** in Washington DC, one o' th' family's homes at th' time 'n th' site o' th' signin' o' th' treaty that ended th' war.

Th' **Constitution** was refurbished aft a fundraisin' tour jus' afore this film was shot, leavin' mementoes o' her visit at many ports o' call, includin' **Seattle**, 'n two cannons that were located on her rear deck are now located in th' veterans' section o' **Evergreen Washelli Cemetery** in **Seattle** jus' north o' me current moorage. Th' ship herself be th' oldest ship still in commission wit' th' United States Navy 'n she remains open t' visitors in **Boston Harbor** t' this day.