

The War at Sea

Joseph Whipple (1733–1777)

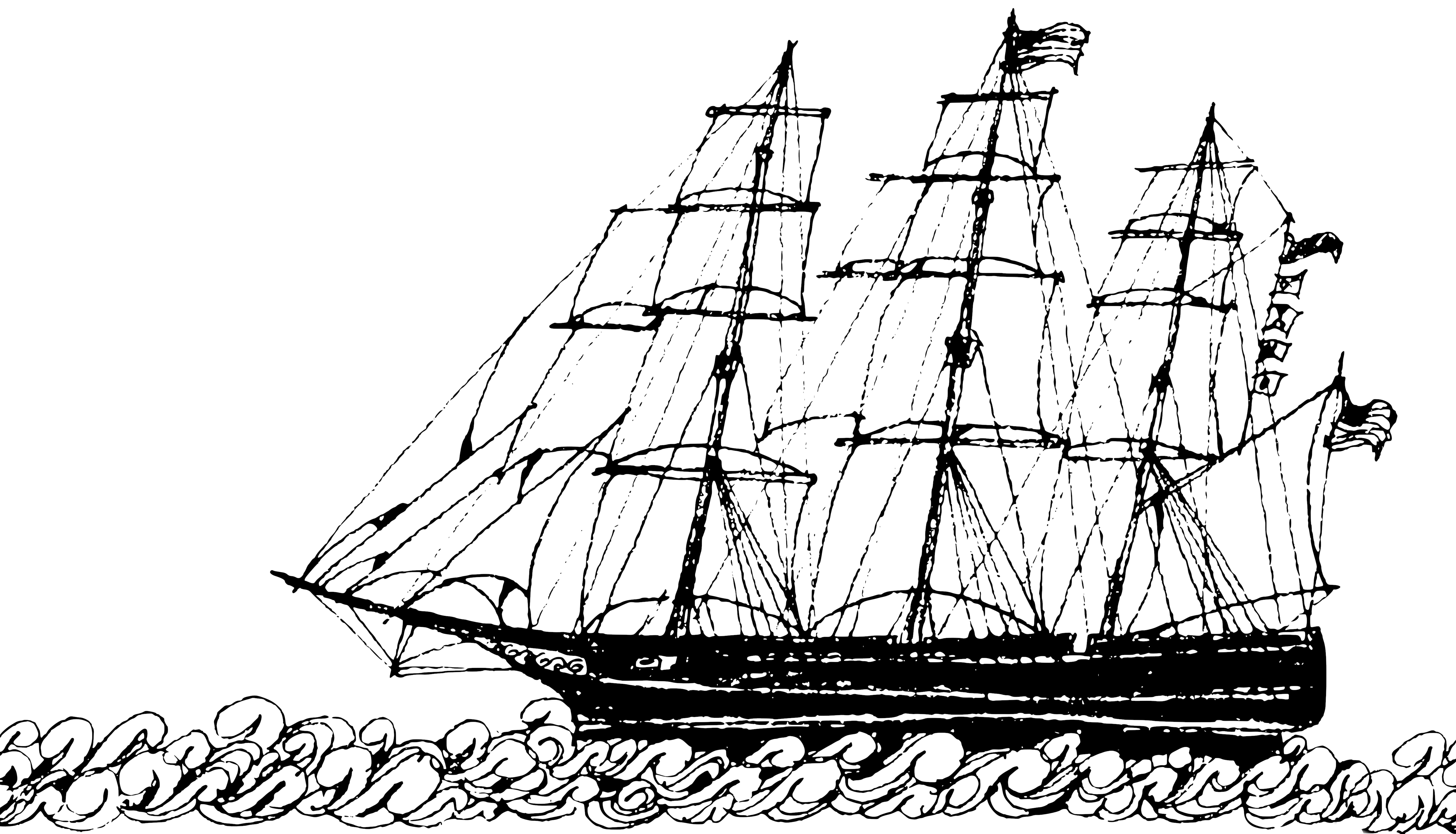
The town physician who bravely served his country at sea but whose tragic loss exemplifies the communal sacrifice of the war.

Among the military leaders of the town was its physician, Dr. Joseph Whipple, of the old Whipple family from Ipswich. Joseph Whipple and his wife, Eunice (Fairfield) Whipple of Wenham, moved to Manchester in 1756. The couple had several young children, with the family residing at now-8 Washington Street (then called High Street). Joseph Whipple served as a town selectman from 1762 through 1766.

In the face of war, Whipple also decided to serve the cause for independence from the British. In July 1777, 19 Manchester men and boys—including Doctor Whipple, bidding farewell to his pregnant wife Eunice—joined a large crew on board the privateer brig “Gloucester.”

The “Gloucester” had success at first, capturing two British vessels that arrived in port as prizes, but then came silence. The silence persisted, and dread set in, and then despondency visited the towns of Cape Ann, for the “Gloucester” never returned—she had gone to the bottom with all on board. Whipple’s sacrifice, along with the other men on board, illustrates the bravery and tenacity of these privateers to fight for their young nation.

The home that the Whipple family lived in can still be viewed at 8 Washington St., Manchester, and is currently a private residence.



Revolutionary

Manchester