

The Brig *Betsy*

What remains of the *Betsy* lies on the bottom of the York River just beyond the end of this pier. A two-masted brig, originally built to carry coal, the *Betsy* was one of more than a dozen vessels deliberately scuttled, or sunk, by the



Courtesy of Bates Littlehales, Photographer.

British in September 1781 just off the Yorktown waterfront.

Beginning in 1982, Virginia Department of Historic Resources archaeologists excavated parts of the ship as well as hundreds of other artifacts. A temporary steel cofferdam eliminated dangerous currents and also allowed for improved visibility. Much of the ship's hull and framing had survived after more than 200 years. Among the artifacts recovered from the 175-foot-long brig were weapons, rigging, barrels, a cannon carriage, and personal objects from the captain's cabin.



*Original art by Roy Andersen, courtesy of Jamestown-Yorktown Foundation.
Photo courtesy of David L. Justis, M.D.*

