

As GPS furnishes 3D coordinates, some analyses concerning the course of the height of the cableway are possible. On one hand it is possible to draw a side-face of the cableway, which emphasises the position of the tower (in Fig. 3). On the other hand it is possible to integrate this information in a GIS, e. g. about the obstacles for the aviation. There-with, given the suitable software, 3D scenery representing the landscape and the cableway are computable (in Fig. 4).



Fig. 3 Side-face of the cableway

## 5 Conclusion

From the described project, the following conclusions can be drawn:

1) Methods of satellite geodesy can be applied to determine the actual position of the axis of the cableway. As a consequence, also the deviations

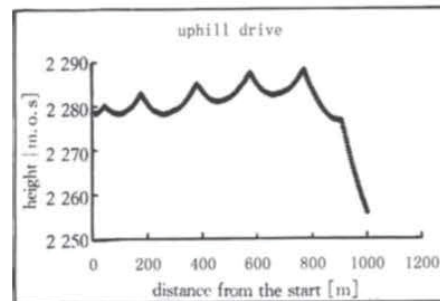


Fig. 4 3D scenery

of the position of the tower, due to geodynamic process or mechanical movement, can be detected.

2) Compensation of GPS observations brings about better results, when a condition of linearity is taken into account.

3) Conditions of linearity allow to detect outliers.

4) The method is reliable and precise.

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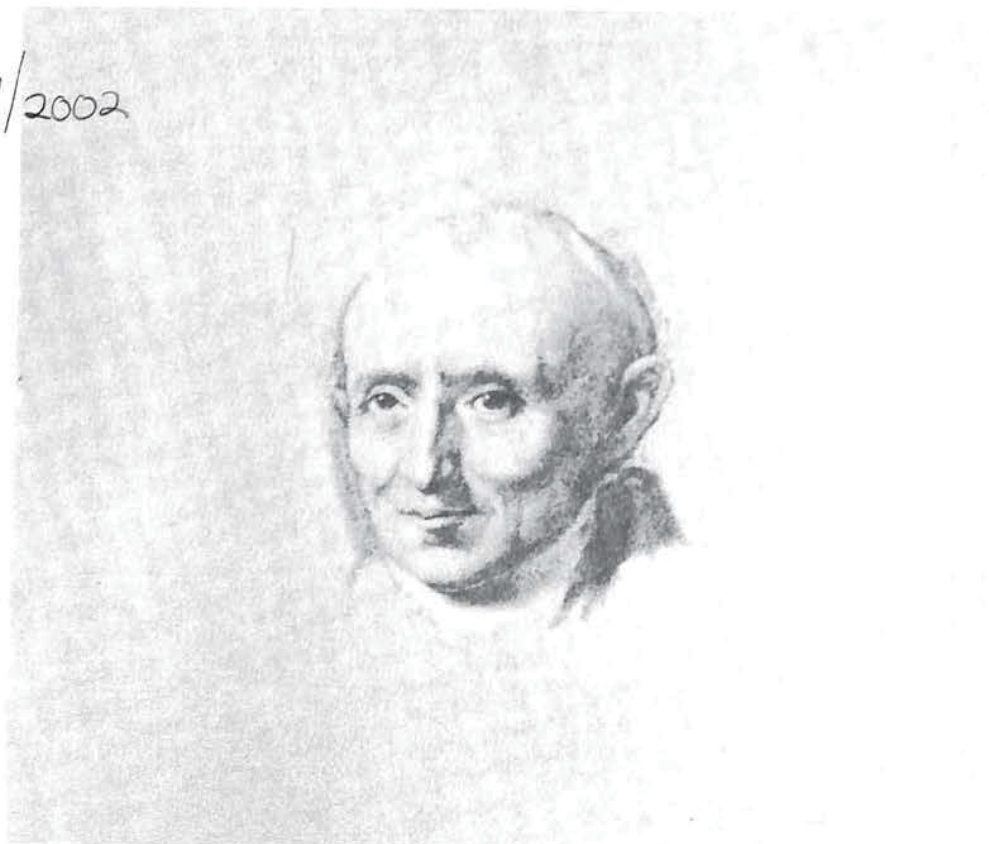
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Last painting by Gilbert Stuart (1828). Considered by the family of Bowditch to be the best of various paintings made, although it was unfinished when the artist died.

## NATHANIEL BOWDITCH

### (1773-1838)

Nathaniel Bowditch was born on March 26, 1773, in Salem, Mass., fourth of the seven children of shipmaster Habakkuk Bowditch and his wife, Mary.

Since the migration of William Bowditch from England to the Colonies in the 17th century, the family had resided at Salem. Most of its sons, like those of other families in this New England seaport, had gone to sea, and many of them became shipmasters. Nathaniel Bowditch himself sailed as master on his last voyage, and two of his brothers met untimely deaths while pursuing careers at sea.

Nathaniel Bowditch's father is said to have lost two ships at sea, and by late Revolutionary days he returned to the trade of cooper, which he had learned in his youth. This provided insufficient income to properly supply the needs of his growing family, who were often hungry and cold. For many years the nearly destitute family received an annual grant of 15 to 20 dollars from the Salem Marine Society. By the time Nathaniel had reached the age of 10, the family's poverty forced him to leave school and join his father in the cooper's trade to help support the family.

Nathaniel was unsuccessful as a cooper, and when he was about 12 years of age, he entered the first of two ship-chandlery firms by which he was employed. It was during the nearly 10 years he was so employed that his great mind first attracted public attention. From the time he began school Bowditch had an all-consuming interest in learning, particularly mathematics. By his middle teens he was recognized in Salem as an authority on that subject. Salem being primarily a shipping town, most of the inhabitants sooner or later found their way to the ship chandler, and news of the brilliant young clerk spread until eventually it came to the attention of the learned men of his day. Impressed by his desire to educate himself, they supplied him with books that he might learn of the discoveries of other men. Since many of the best books were written by Europeans, Bowditch first taught himself their languages. French, Spanish, Latin, Greek and German were among the two dozen or more languages and dialects he studied during his life. At the age of 16 he began the study of Newton's *Principia*, translating parts of it from the Latin. He even found an error in that classic text, and though lacking the confidence to announce it at the time, he later published his findings and had them accepted by the scientific community.

During the Revolutionary War a privateer out of Beverly, a neighboring town to Salem, had taken as one of its prizes an English vessel which was carrying the philosophical library of a famed Irish scholar, Dr. Richard Kirwan. The books were brought to the Colonies and there bought by a group of educated Salem men who used them to found the

Philosophical Library Company, reputed to have been the best library north of Philadelphia at the time. In 1791, when Bowditch was 18, two Harvard-educated ministers, Rev. John Prince and Rev. William Bentley, persuaded the Company to allow Bowditch the use of its library. Encouraged by these two men and a third, Nathan Read, an apothecary and also a Harvard man, Bowditch studied the works of the great men who had preceded him, especially the mathematicians and the astronomers. By the time he became of age, this knowledge, acquired when not working long hours at the chandlery, had made young Nathaniel the outstanding mathematician in the Commonwealth, and perhaps in the country.

In the seafaring town of Salem, Bowditch was drawn to navigation early, learning the subject at the age of 13 from an old British sailor. A year later he began studying surveying, and in 1794 he assisted in a survey of the town. At 15 he devised an almanac reputed to have been of great accuracy. His other youthful accomplishments included the construction of a crude barometer and a sundial.

When Bowditch went to sea at the age of 21, it was as captain's writer and nominal second mate, the officer's berth being offered him because of his reputation as a scholar. Under Captain Henry Prince, the ship *Henry* sailed from Salem in the winter of 1795 on what was to be a year-long voyage to the Ile de Bourbon (now called Reunion) in the Indian Ocean.

Bowditch began his seagoing career when accurate time was not available to the average naval or merchant ship. A reliable marine chronometer had been invented some 60 years before, but the prohibitive cost, plus the long voyages without opportunity to check the error of the timepiece, made the large investment an impractical one. A system of determining longitude by "lunar distance," a method which did not require an accurate timepiece, was known, but this product of the minds of mathematicians and astronomers was so involved as to be beyond the capabilities of the uneducated seamen of that day. Consequently, ships were navigated by a combination of dead reckoning and parallel sailing (a system of sailing north or south to the latitude of the destination and then east or west to the destination). The navigational routine of the time was "lead, log, and lookout."

To Bowditch, the mathematical genius, computation of lunar distances was no mystery, of course, but he recognized the need for an easier method of working them in order to navigate ships more safely and efficiently. Through analysis and observation, he derived a new and simplified formula during his first trip.

John Hamilton Moore's *The Practical Navigator* was the leading navigational text when Bowditch first went to sea, and had been for many years. Early in his first voyage,

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