

containing William Falconer's Shipwreck⁸⁵ bore the imprint, "Published by David Porter ... Printed for the publisher by W. Pechin". It is easy to see why a retired sea captain would be interested in bringing out the narrative poem of the Shipwreck, but it is more difficult to understand why ten pages of the Life of AEsop were appended. On March 22, 1797, Porter issued proposals for printing the English translation of Fenoit de Maillet's Telliamed,⁸⁶

To be issued to subscribers complete and neatly bound at one dollar and fifty cents, to be paid for and delivered ... Will be put to press as soon as 1000 subscribers are obtained.⁸⁷

This scientific-philosophical work, also printed by Pechin (perhaps this edition - who knows?) is said to have suggested to Darwin his celebrated theory.⁸⁸ It must have been a popular work; twenty-seven copies of it are known to be extant today.

Porter's Observatory commanded an unexcelled view of the harbor. Porter erected a flag staff, imported a telescope from London, obtained other perspective glasses, and advertised a system of communicating quickly with Baltimore merchants whose ships were entering the harbor from Chesapeake Bay. Certain ensigns and pennants

85 Appendix A. Imprint bibliography, item 282.

86 Appendix A. Imprint bibliography, item 369.

87 Maryland journal. March 22, 1797.

88 Sabin, Joseph. A dictionary of books relating to America. v. 11, p. 118.