

Knowledge Miles: The 695th Lord Mayor's Lectures



Why The Wreck Of The Gloucester In 1682 Matters: The Secrets Of A Restoration Warship

Professor Claire Jowitt | Professor of Renaissance Studies, University of East Anglia

The Gloucester 1682 Trust

Free online lecture

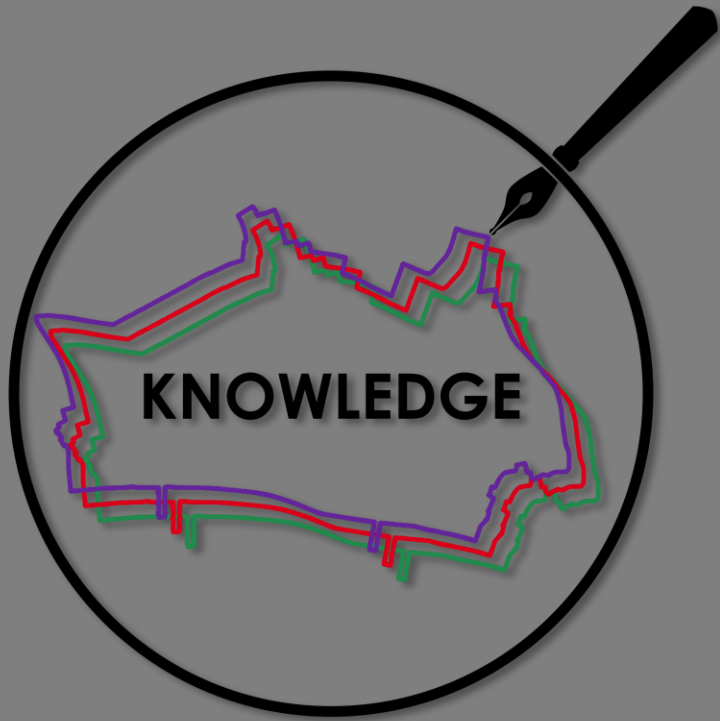
11:00, Thursday, 22 February 2024

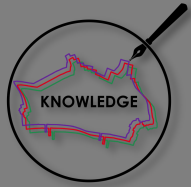


A Word From Our Convenor

Dr Giles Richardson

Senior Archaeologist
Maritime Archaeology Sea
Trust





Today's Agenda

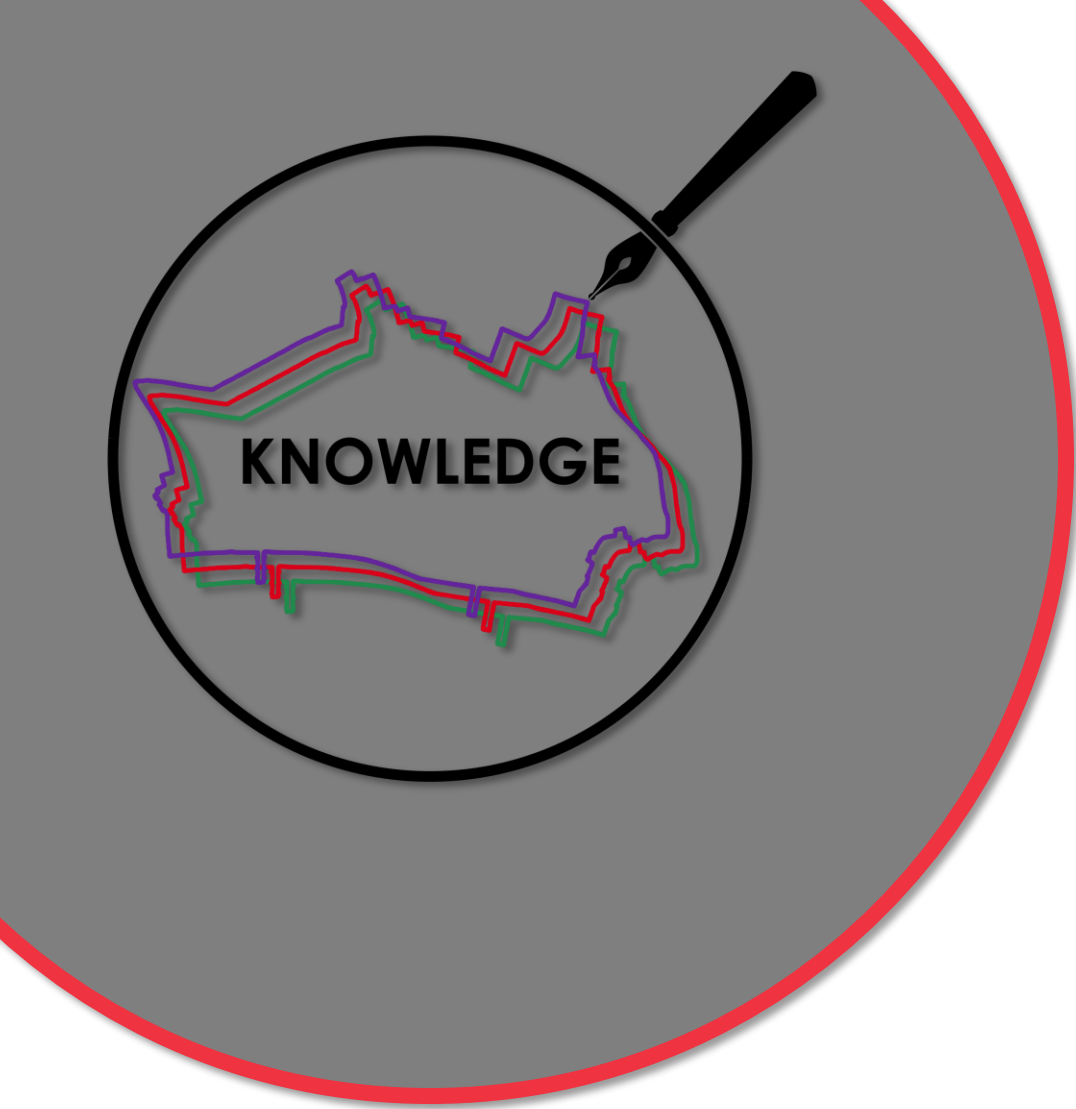


- 11:00 - 11:05 Chairman's Introduction
- 11:05 - 11:25 Keynote Presentation - Professor Claire Jowitt
- 11:25 - 11:45 Question & Answer

Today's Speaker

Professor Claire Jowitt

Professor of Renaissance
Studies
University of East Anglia



WHY THE WRECK OF
THE *GLOUCESTER* IN
1682 MATTERS: THE
SECRETS OF A
RESTORATION
WARSHIP

CLAIRE JOWITT

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JAMES, DUKE OF
YORK, 1633-1701, IN
ROMAN GARB, BY
HENRI GASCAR,
1672/3. © NMM



PETER LELY,
PORTRAIT OF QUEEN
MARY OF MODENA (1658-
1718),
C. 1672. © PHILIP MOULD



THE WRECK OF THE
GLOUCESTER OFF
YARMOUTH 6 MAY
1682, BY JOHAN
DANCKERTS, C.
1682. © NMM



DUKE OF MONMOUTH,
C.1678, STUDIO OF SIR
GODFREY KNELLER.

© NPG



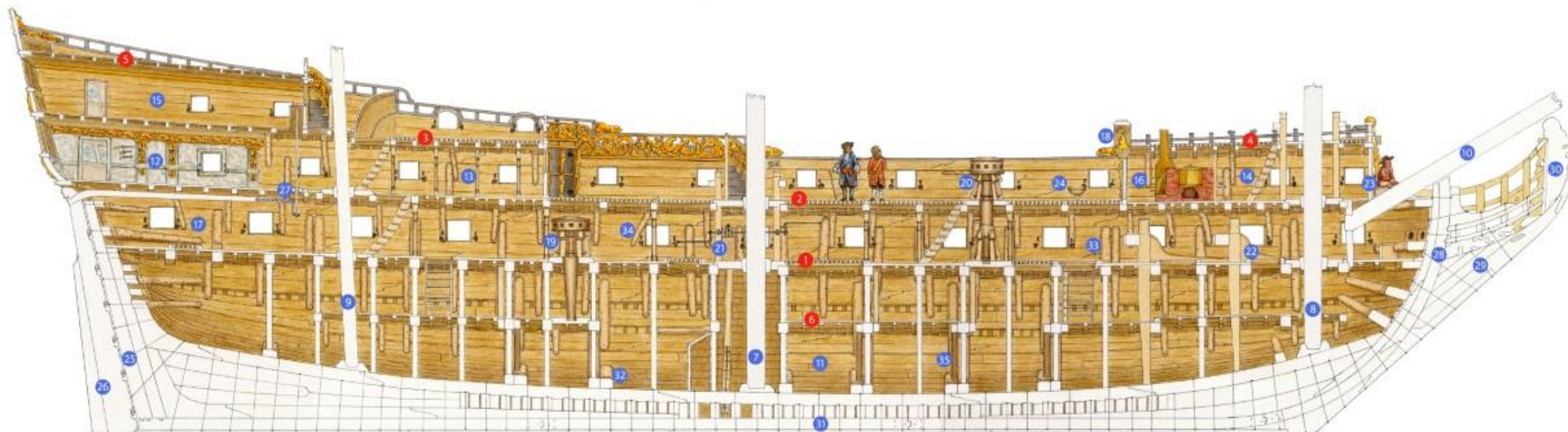
CASPAR NETSCHER,
PORTRAIT OF KING WILLIAM III (1650-
1702) WHEN PRINCE OF ORANGE, C. 1675.
© PHILIP MOULD



PETER LELY,
PORTRAIT OF QUEEN MARY II, WHEN PRINCESS
OF ORANGE, LATE 1670S. © PHILIP MOULD



JOHN CHURCHILL, LATER
1ST DUKE OF
MARLBOROUGH, JOHN
RILEY, C.1685-90.
© BLENHEIM PALACE.



- | | | | | | |
|-------------------|----------------|---------------|-----------------|---------------|------------------|
| 1 Gun deck | 7 Main mast | 13 Steerage | 19 Main capstan | 25 Stern post | 31 Keel |
| 2 Upper deck | 8 Fore mast | 14 Forecastle | 20 Jeer capstan | 26 Rudder | 32 Riders |
| 3 Quarterdeck | 9 Mizzen mast | 15 Roundhouse | 21 Chain pumps | 27 Whipstaff | 33 Standards |
| 4 Forecastle deck | 10 Bowsprit | 16 Cook room | 22 Riding bits | 28 Stem | 34 Knees |
| 5 Poop | 11 Hold | 17 Gunroom | 23 Seat of ease | 29 Head | 35 Cross pillars |
| 6 Platforms | 12 Great cabin | 18 Belfry | 24 Pissdale | 30 Figurehead | |

The Gloucester in 1682

Richard Endsor 2022



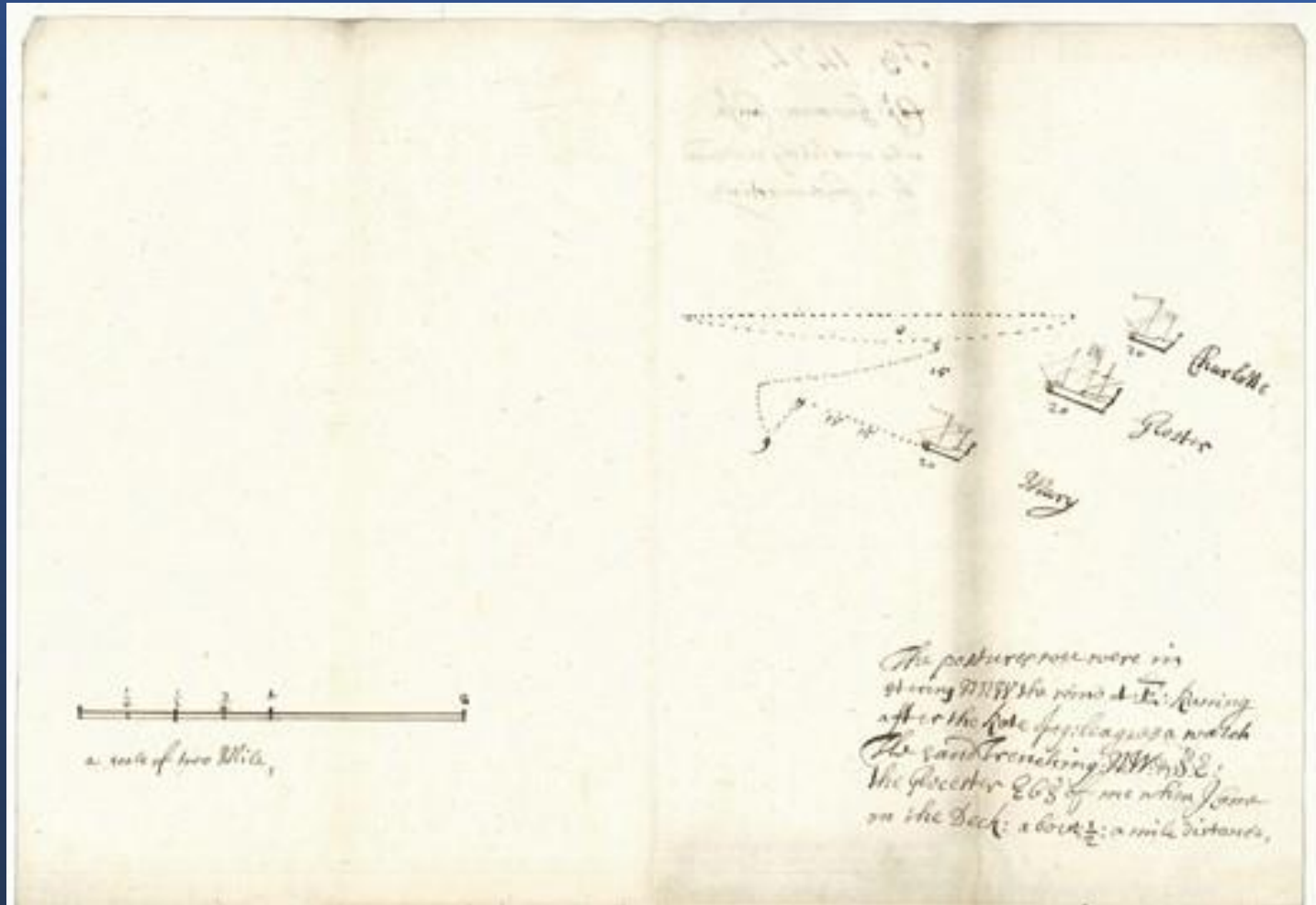
A NEW MAPPE OF THE SEA
COAST OF ENGLAND FRANCE
AND HOLLAND, PUBLISHED IN
1675 IN 'ATLAS MARITIMUS',
OR THE SEA ATLAS BY
ROYAL HYDROGRAPHER JOHN
SELLER. © NMM



ADMIRAL SIR RICHARD
HADDOCK, BY JOHN
CLOSTERMAN, C.1700.
© NMRN

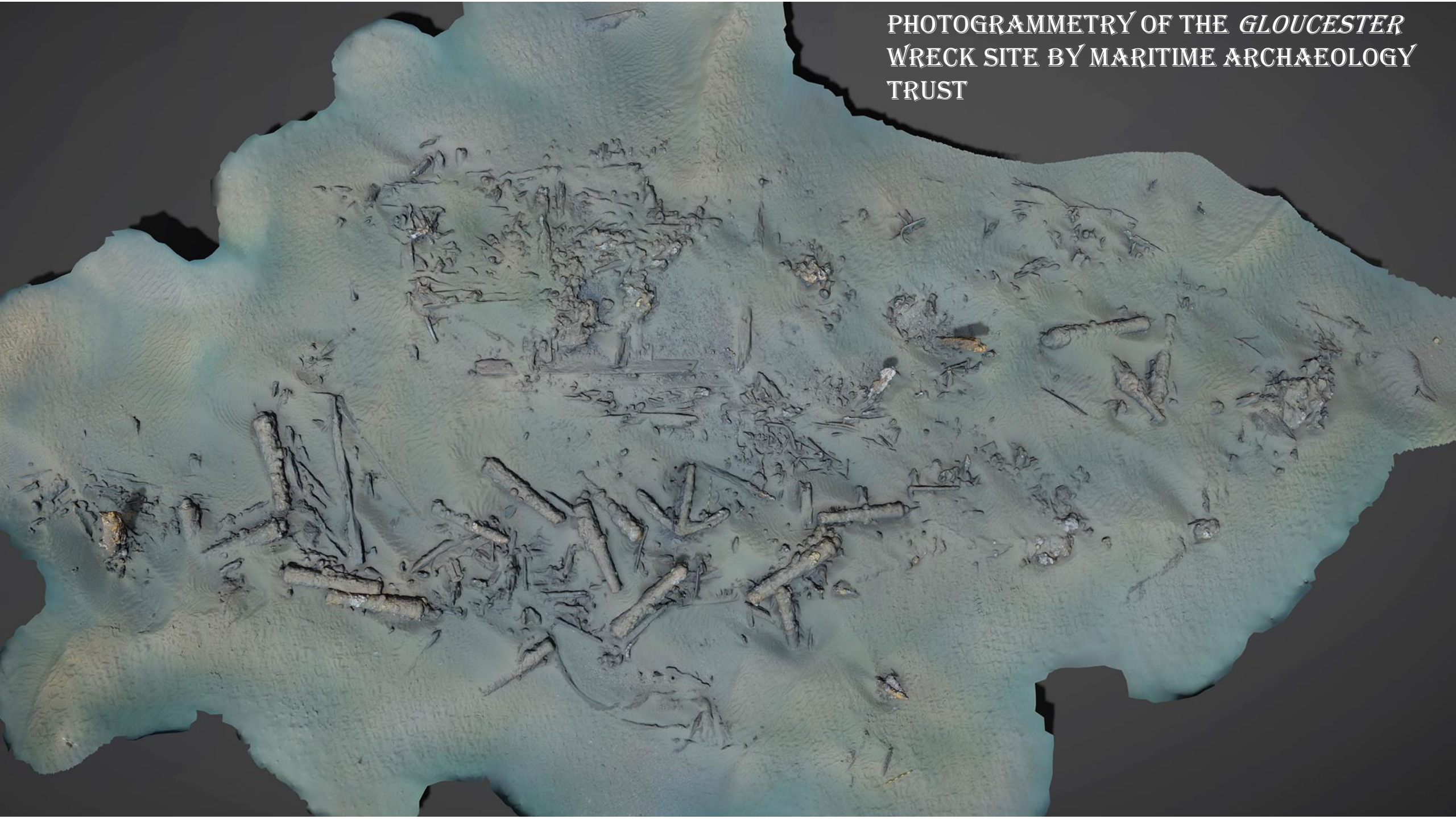


CAPTAIN CHRISTOPHER
GUNMAN BY UNKNOWN
ARTIST, C.1675. ©
DODDINGTON HALL



CAPTAIN CHRISTOPHER GUNMAN'S NOTE, 'THE POSTURES WEE WERE IN STERING NNW THE WIND AT E: RUNING AFTER THE RATE OF 9: LEAGUES A WATCH THE SAND TRENCHING NW: & SE: THE GLOCESTER E BY S OF ME WHEN I CAME ON THE DECK: ABOUT 1/2: A MILE DISTANCE'. © STAFFORDSHIRE RECORD OFFICE AND THE DARTMOUTH HEIRLOOM TRUST

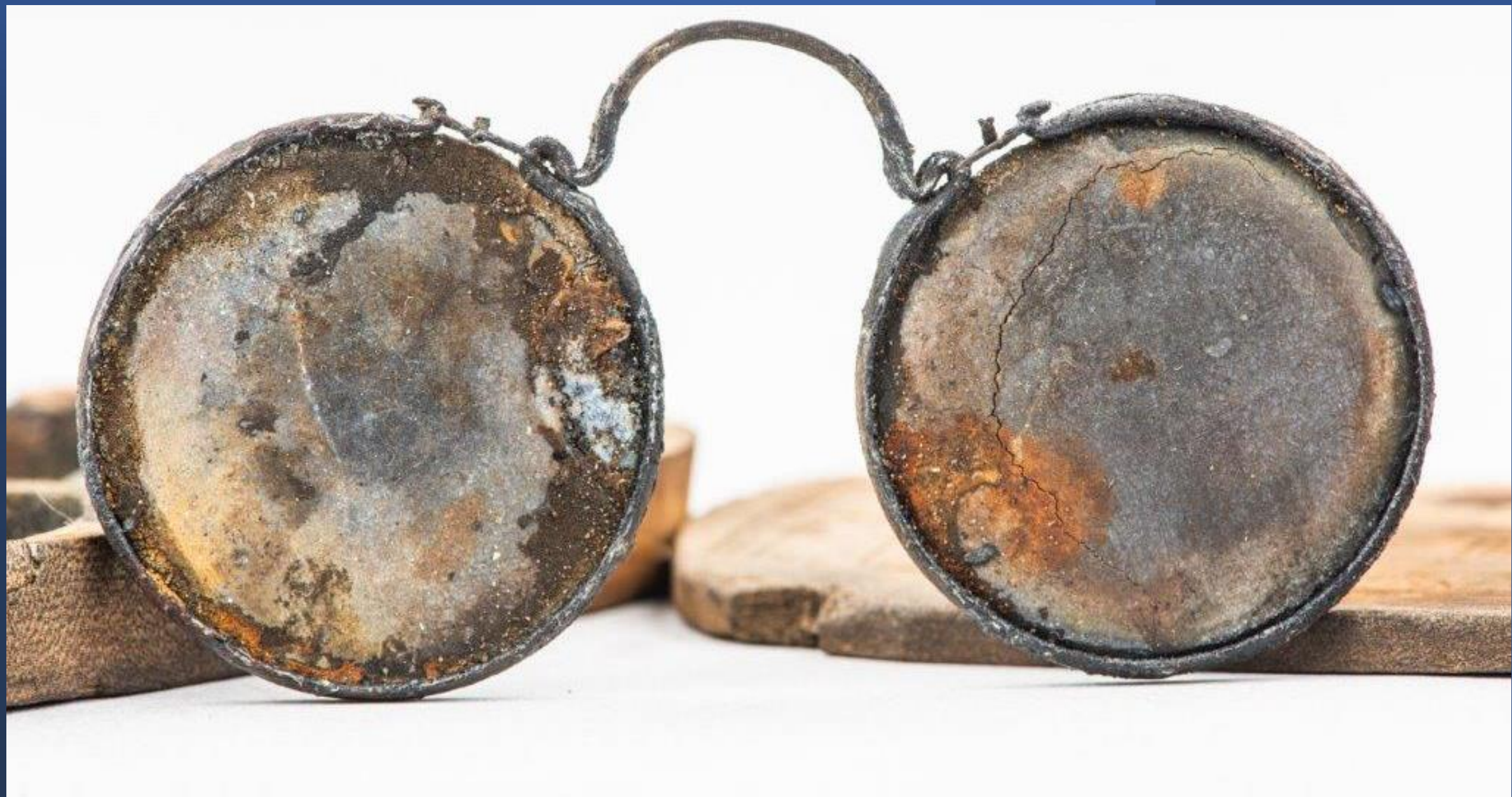
PHOTOGRAMMETRY OF THE *GLOUCESTER*
WRECK SITE BY MARITIME ARCHAEOLOGY
TRUST





© NORFOLK HISTORIC
SHIPWRECKS





























CLAIRE JOWITT, 'THE LAST VOYAGE OF THE *GLOUCESTER* (1682): THE POLITICS OF A ROYAL SHIPWRECK', *ENGLISH HISTORICAL REVIEW*, VOLUME 137, ISSUE 586 (2022): 728-762.

BENJAMIN REDDING, 'THE WESTERN DESIGN REVISED: DEATH, DISSENT, AND DISCONTENT ON THE *GLOUCESTER*, 1654-1656', *THE HISTORICAL JOURNAL*, VOLUME 66, ISSUE 5 (2023):945-970.

*The Last Voyage of the Gloucester (1682): The Politics of a Royal Shipwreck**

On 6 May 1682, James Stuart, duke of York and later James II and VII, travelling on the third-rate frigate *Gloucester*, was shipwrecked off the coast of Norfolk while *en route* to Scotland. The ship struck sandbanks a few hours after a protracted argument between the Duke, the pilot and several naval officers over the course that was to be taken. James abandoned ship shortly before the *Gloucester* sank, transferring to an accompanying vessel to complete his voyage, but hundreds of passengers and crew died. These tragic events and their causes have been the focus of some attention, but are incorrectly understood in current historiography.¹ Most recently, poor transcription of a number of key documents in Nigel Pickford's 2021 study *Samuel Pepys and the Strange Wrecking of the Gloucester: A True Restoration Tragedy* has led to spurious conclusions about what happened and why.²

* This work was supported by the award of a Leverhulme Trust Project Grant RPG-2021-025 (2021-24) for 'The Wreck of the Gloucester: The Life and Times of a Seventeenth-Century Third-Rate Warship'. I am grateful to Benjamin Redding for assistance that aided the preparation of my article and for providing comments on its progress drafts. I am pleased to acknowledge the support for this project of Julian Burnwood, Lincoln Burnwood, Sarah Barron, Ruth Barronby Tooke, Henry Cane, Richard Dutton, David Ellis, Steve Miller, Matthias Neumann, David Richardson and Francesca Vanke.

1. A number of publications have explored the events of the wreck: G. Robinson, 'The Casting Away of the Gloucester, 1682', *History Today*, v (1951), pp. 244-50; M. Coombs, 'Christopher Gannan and the Wreck of the Gloucester', pp. 1 and II, *Milner's Mirror*, xliii (1996), pp. 113-26, 329-33; J. Lang and B. Long, *The Plot Against Pepys* (London, 2007), pp. 212-64; N. Pickford, *Samuel Pepys and the Strange Wrecking of the Gloucester: A True Restoration Tragedy* (Cheltenham, 2021).

2. Pickford argues that a chemical reaction between sea water, the *Gloucester's* iron bolts and the protective lead sheathing on the underside of its hull caused what he considers to have been an old ship to founder in service 'after more than eight years of rotting in harbours': *Samuel Pepys and the Strange Wrecking of the Gloucester*, p. 107. This argument is incorrect. The *Gloucester* was not sheathed by Thomas Pate in 1671/4 to protect the hull from corrosion. Pickford makes a transcription error (pp. 124, 126), mistaking 'lead' for 'lead' in Pate's collection of the repairs undertaken; the passage should read 'We took off the Cheekes of the head under one of which were found a very great and Dangerous leak' (Brew, *The National Archives [hereafter TNA], ADM 106/307*, fo. 265) the same transcription error is repeated for Pate's recollections of works undertaken a few days later, which should read 'now the head is rotted off' (TNA, ADM 106/307, fo. 270). Pate's letter detailing these repairs is dated 10 April 1674, and was written months after repairs to the *Gloucester* were completed (it departed from Woolwich on 12 Jan. 1674; TNA, ADM 106/307, fo. 230). It also confirms that his first experience of ship-sheathing in lead was his current project, the *Arcton*: 'we never did at this place sheath any ship with lead before' (TNA, ADM 106/307, fo. 297). The catalogue of repairs and supplies for an extensive refit and rebuild between 1678 and 1680 indicates that the *Gloucester* was not sheathed in lead at this point. Work upon the ship's 'straggle work' was still not completed on 21 January 1680, according to Daniel Farrow, Master Shipwright at Portsmouth Dockyard, and lead is not mentioned as part of the supplies required, which instead focus on ironworks and wood (TNA, ADM 106/302, fo. 493; ADM 106/348, fo. 62; ADM 106/348, fo. 97; ADM 106/348, fo. 302; ADM 106/348, fo. 127). Consequently, Pickford's other central argument, that Samuel Pepys took by choice a berth on the

ARTICLE

The Western Design Revised: Death, Dissent, and Discontent on the *Gloucester*, 1654-1656

Benjamin W. D. Redding

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Abstract

In December 1654 a large naval force departed from Portsmouth and sailed across the Atlantic, its goal was to expand the English Commonwealth in the Caribbean at the expense of Spanish colonies. The *Gloucester*, a third-rate frigate recently constructed as part of Oliver Cromwell's ambitious shipbuilding programme, was one of the largest and most heavily armed warships of the expedition. Combining analysis of courts martial accounts, inventories, journals, letters, sailing instructions, and wills, this article argues for the *Gloucester's* importance as a case study and microcosm for understanding the economic, political, religious, and social problems that the navy and wider Protectorate faced. It revises traditional historiography about the topic that has underestimated the significance of the naval context to the Western Design. Crucial to this new history is that the extreme hardships and religious divisions created tensions that targeted the leadership of Admiral William Goodson. Of particular importance in this narrative is Benjamin Blake, captain of the *Gloucester*, who clashed with Goodson over key policies. By focusing on the *Gloucester* and exploring its crew's experiences, this article shows that the English navy was a restricted and internally conflicted force when operating at the peripheries of the state network.

The Western Design was an amphibious project of unprecedented operational complexity.¹ It departed from Portsmouth in December 1654 and captured Jamaica but failed to seize other key Spanish holdings in the Caribbean, thereby exposing the English state's inability to control and supply its forces across the world. Carla Gardina Pestana's recent study has characterized the scheme as a forerunner of global conflict by introducing 'the challenge of conducting amphibious warfare in the tropics' with a large transatlantic

¹ 'The Western Design' was a phrase coined by contemporaries to describe the scheme's initially undefined targets in Spanish America. See J. H. Elliot, *Empire of the Atlantic world: Britain and Spain in America, 1492-1700* (New Haven, CT, 2007), p. 313.



[HTTPS://GLOUCESTER1682TRUST.ORG](https://gloucester1682trust.org)

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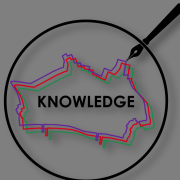
The finding of the *Gloucester* is an internationally significant event.

The Gloucester (1682) Trust aims to conserve and display the Gloucester's unique collection of artefacts and to share knowledge about the ship's remarkable history with this and future generations.

It has the potential to revolutionise our understanding of the seventeenth century and of Norfolk's place in the world.”

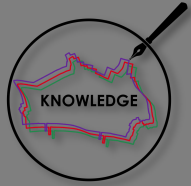
General The Lord Dannatt GCB CBE MC, Chair of The Gloucester 1682 Charitable Trust





Comments, Questions & Answers





Forthcoming Lectures



- Tuesday, 27 February 2024 (11:00 - 11:45 GMT) A Tour of London, Science City, 1550–1800
- Thursday, 29 February 2024 (11:00 - 11:45 GMT) How Will We Be Long? - How Can A Piece Of Music Help Us Think About The Next Thousand Years?
- Tuesday, 05 March 2024 (11:00 - 11:45 GMT) Looking Ahead: Personal Reflections On Using Management Insights From Physics & Economics To Approach Pressing Societal Challenges

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