

An Elizabethan Pilot's Charts (1594): Spanish Intelligence Regarding the Coasts of England and Wales at the End of the XVIth Century

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Four manuscript charts of British ports, and notes on them, were made in the 1590s by an English Catholic pilot, N. Lambert. They were sent to Don Juan de Idiáquez, Philip II's secretary, through the mediation of an English Jesuit exile, Robert Persons (or Parsons). Lambert also offered to pilot Spanish ships and guide Spanish troops in raids on the coasts of England and Wales, and prepared a list of appropriate targets. Being some of the earliest charts of the ports concerned, and hitherto unpublished, they are here presented with relevant background material.

KEY WORDS

1. Maps and Charts. 2. History. 3. Marine.

1. INTRODUCTION. We do not know precisely what charts the Armada had at its disposal in 1588, though certainly the first Dutch edition of Lucas Jansz Waghenaer's *Spiegel der Zeevaert* was available, having been published in Leiden in 1584–85, and in Latin the following year.¹ The English translation, *The Mariners Mirrour*, was published in London in 1588,² but whether in time for copies to get to Spain is uncertain. The only coastlines in the British Isles for which detailed charts were provided in *Spiegel der Zeevaert* were those from the Scilly Isles to North Foreland, and thence north as far as Aberdeen. The whole British Isles appeared on a general map of Europe that was also published separately. Two manuscript copies of charts in Waghenaer's *Spiegel*, covering the English coast from the Isle of Wight to the Straits of Dover, were made by the Portuguese cartographer, Luís Teixeira, with a few of the inscriptions translated into Portuguese. Their dates are unknown.³ Other copies may well have been made, but none is known to have survived. Christopher Saxton's maps of the counties of England and Wales had been published by 1579,⁴ both in atlas format and individually, but whether the Spaniards had them available for use during the invasion we do not know. How much use they might have been for navigational purposes is in any case debatable. Some detailed Spanish charts of parts of the British Isles may have existed, though none would seem to have survived. One chart of the coastlines of Western Europe by Domingo Villaroel (Doménico de Vigliaroula), a Neopolitan cleric, who was a cartographer in the Casa de Contratación in Seville from 1586 to 1596 (Figure 1), shows that Spanish cartographers had a better idea of the outline of the British Isles, and especially of Scotland, than might be expected from most surviving Portuguese charts of the period.⁵ Philip is known to have possessed Ortelius's *Theatrum Orbis Terrarum*



Figure 1. The British Isles on a manuscript chart of the coasts of Western Europe by Domingo Villaroel, a cartographer in the Casa de Contratación from 1586 to 1596 (courtesy of the Hispanic Society of America; K18, chart 3, detail). The place-names are recorded in the traditional portolan manner, inland from the coast, so that they are always legible by rotating the chart. Note: the misplacement of *astinges* (Hastings) to the west of *scoram* (Shoreham); *Glesei* (Anglesey) is lacking its first syllable; the *gl* in the spelling of *uaglmare* (Falmouth) seems clearly to indicate the hand of the chart's Italian maker.

(1570), which contained quite good maps of Western Europe and the British Isles.⁶

An official set of sailing directions, the *Derrotero de las costas de Bretaña, Normandia, Picardia, hasta Flandes, y de la de Inglaterra, Manga de Bristol y Sant*

Iorge, y parte de la costa de Irlanda was published by Antonio Álvarez in Lisbon on 30th March 1588 on the orders of the Duke of Medina Sidonia. At least one copy survives, that provided for Philip II, and it contains a query in his own, very illegible, hand.⁷ A manuscript version is in the British library.⁸ This set of sailing directions was probably a compilation of those used by the captains of Spanish commercial vessels, to judge from the advice to pick up a pilot at Lundy, Caldey or Tenby before proceeding further up the Bristol Channel, or in *las Dunas* (the Downs), if bound for *Dobla* (Dover) or *Londres* (London). However, this could merely have implied that they should capture pilots, or that Catholic ones might come out to meet them. These sailing instructions give information about directions and distances between ports and other vital landmarks, tidal flows, the positions of shoals, and the nature of the sea bottom in different places. They give no information about English defences, apart from the mention of a chain across the entrance to *Falamua* (Falmouth), which had been broken by a Spanish vessel. Some castles are mentioned, but only as landmarks. No information whatsoever is given north of *Tierra bermeja* (The Naze), near Harwich, on the east coast of England.⁹ To the west, no mention is made of any feature north of *la Isla de Baldresay* (Bardsey Island) and *Oliet* (Holyhead) in St George's Channel, and the *ysla de man* in the Irish Sea.¹⁰ *Gatafurda* (Waterford) is the most northerly place mentioned on the eastern side of Ireland, and *Drosey* (Dursey Island), *los Guelmes* (the Skelligs)¹¹ and *Sant Michel* (Darrynane harbour?) are the most northerly features cited on its Atlantic coast.¹² Evidently the possible need for information about more northerly waters was never envisaged.

Printed Italian, French and Dutch sailing directions certainly existed, from at least as early as 1490,¹³ 1502–10,¹⁴ and 1532 respectively.¹⁵ A partial French translation of the first Italian ones was published in 1577,¹⁶ though it is difficult to understand why. It was not nearly as good as Pierre Garcie's *Le grand Routtier et Pylottage* of 1520 and 1521,¹⁷ but perhaps they were no longer available. However, a new edition of Garcie's work was published in 1584. English translations of the earliest French and Dutch ones first appeared in 1528,¹⁸ and 1584 respectively.¹⁹ There seems to be no evidence to suggest that any were translated into Spanish, nor that the Armada captains had access to any sailing directions other than those that were officially issued. However, further information must surely have been available from mariners, and especially fishermen who were familiar with the waters off the southern coasts of England and Ireland, and from some manuscript charts. Some information may well have been provided through Spanish diplomatic channels, as well as by Spanish intelligence gatherers and interrogators, and perhaps by English, presumably Catholic, exiles. The English themselves captured Spanish fishermen and interrogated them.²⁰

The cartographer Bernardino de Escalante would seem to have suggested Scotland as the most appropriate landing place, to judge from a sketch map drawn by him, and the notes on it (Figure 2).²¹ On 3rd April 1588, a few days after the *Derrotero* was printed, and less than three months before the Armada put to sea, Escalante wrote to Philip II, advising him, for a number of reasons, against the plan for the Armada to meet up with Parma's army. Instead he suggested that the Armada should land an army at *Milfor(t)* (Milford Haven), and Parma should open a 'second front', transporting part of his army across the Channel in the numerous small vessels he had assembled at *Dunquerche* (Dunkirk), *Vniporte* (Nieuport) and *la Esclusa* (Sluis), landing them between *la punta de Santa Margarita* (the South Foreland) and *Margata*, or further up the Thames estuary, at *Roquester* (Rochester), *Gilinguen*

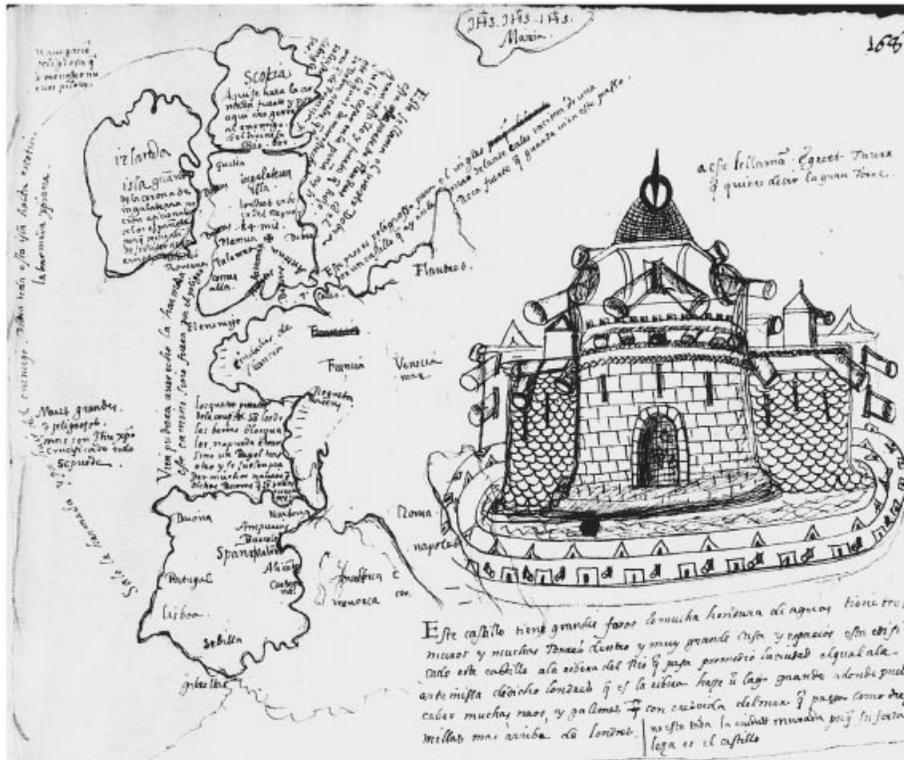


Figure 2. Sketch map by Bernadino de Escalante (Courtesy of the Biblioteca Nacional, Madrid; Ms. 5785). The cartographer suggests Scotland as the most appropriate invasion site, even though many pilots would be needed. The size of the sketch did not allow for the correct placement of the place-names. Thus, *Artamua* (Dartmouth) is placed on the south coast, but *Plemua* (Plymouth) and *Falamua* (Falmouth) which should also be there, could not be fitted in, and are written in Wales; *Antona* (Southampton) is written where Dover should be, and Dover itself (*Dobra*) appears in East Anglia. A long note in the North Sea cites 7 leagues as the distance between Dover and *cales* (Calais). Escalante was undoubtedly aware of the real location of the places named. However, the misplacement of the names illustrates how easily an uninformed copyist could introduce serious errors onto a chart, especially when the coasts were poorly known and no means of checking was available. Some of the worst examples of misplacement are on the south coast of England, on a map of the 1540s by the Spanish cartographer Alonso de Santa Cruz. See his *Islario general de todas las islas del mundo* (Madrid, Biblioteca Nacional, Ms. Res. 38 1545, fol. 60v) is reproduced in Richardson, W. A. R. (1997). Coastal place-name enigmas on early charts and in early sailing directions. *Journal of the English Place-Name Society*, 29, 5–61; see fig. 7.

(Gillingham) and *Grauesenda* (Gravesend), or in the ports of *Humber* (such as Kingston-upon-Hull) or *Timout* (Tynemouth).²²

The Armada eventually put to sea, first from Lisbon between 28th and 30th June 1588, and then again, from la Coruña on 21st July, but it failed to meet up with the Duke of Parma's army in Dunkirk, as intended, to transport it across the Channel. It suffered a horrendous fate at the hands of the English fleet and the weather.²³ However, even that did not persuade Philip II to give up hope of inflicting severe damage on England, and at least some English Catholics clearly approved, as will be seen below.

A letter from the Duke of Parma, the Spanish commander in the Netherlands, to Philip, dated February 1589, only a few months after the Armada's disastrous experiences, contained a summary of the Duke's ideas on the most appropriate strategy for an attack on England.²⁴ He evaluated the possibilities of joint naval and military attacks along the English Channel coast, recommending that landing parties should demolish beacons before they could be lit by 'the enemy'. He concluded, however, that it was dangerous to go further up the Channel than the Isle of Wight, and suggested that it would be more sensible to occupy the Scilly Isles and secure bases in ports on the south coast of Ireland, which had the additional advantage of being familiar to Basque fishermen. From the comparative safety of Ireland, attacks could be launched against England. The only mainland British port mentioned in connection with this latter plan is *mi delforte hebben* (Milford Haven). The document gives no details of how to proceed from there on. By the time the abortive second and third Armadas of 1596 and 1597 were organised,²⁵ further editions of Waghenaeer's *Spijghel* were available to the Spaniards,²⁶ as well as his *Het Thresoor der Zeevaert* (1592).²⁷ At least three other detailed sources of information were available, though whether any of them were actually used is not known. One was a series of charts made by Robert Adams, published in 1590, detailing, in celebratory manner, the course of the Armada up the Channel.²⁸ Their potential value to the Spaniards was apparently not realised.

There were also two related sets of sailing directions, apparently in the same hand, one for the coasts of England, the *Relacion de los Puertos, Vayas y Cabos del Reyno de Inglaterra...*, and one for the coasts of Ireland, the *Relacion de los Puertos, y Vayas de yrlanda...*²⁹ At the request of Don Juan de Idiáquez, Philip II's secretary, both were sent by the Adelantado de Castilla, Don Martín de Padilla, on 14th December 1597, to Don Martín de Idiáquez, a member of the Councils of State and War, as his brother, Don Juan, was ill with a tertian fever. The authorship of the English set is not clear, but the Adelantado's covering letter certainly appears to state that the Irish set was provided by a dying Irish pilot. The text dealing with the northern coasts of Ireland is decidedly muddled. The Adelantado evidently had another set of sailing directions, for Scotland, but did not send them as he was not satisfied that they were reliable. An English translation of the sailing directions for England exists.³⁰

The third source of information is a set of sketch charts of five ports in England and Wales, as well as information about them, provided by an English Catholic pilot, N. Lambert.³¹ Working for the Spaniards, in Portugal, and probably in Spain as well, he specifically offered his services as a pilot and guide for planned expeditions against England in the 1590s. His charts and notes were sent to Don Juan de Idiáquez, together with a Spanish translation of them, through the good offices of two Englishmen, a certain Jo: Jones, and Father Robert Persons, the Jesuit founder of the College in Valladolid, and one of the leading English Catholic pro-Spanish exiles. Two relevant letters have survived. One is from Jones dated 9th March 1594 in El Puerto de Santa María (near Cadiz) to Robert Persons. The other, in Spanish, dated 7th February 1596, is from Persons to Don Juan de Idiáquez, evidently accompanied by Lambert's charts and text, and its Spanish translation, together with a summary in Spanish, dated 20th January 1596, giving Lambert's evidently expansive opinions regarding the damage galleys could cause by raiding along the coasts of England and Wales. It is probable that Jones' letter to Persons and a Spanish translation of it went

with Persons' covering letter. At any rate all that material has survived, and is contained in the same file in the Museo Naval in Madrid. The charts are some of the earliest surviving ones of the ports concerned, Milford Haven, Falmouth, Plymouth and Dartmouth, and the area of the Isle of Wight, including Southampton and Portsmouth, Figures 3–6. From Jones' letter, it seems that Lambert claimed to have corrected and compared his sketch charts with 'many good draughts and plottes'. This clearly implies that many more charts were available than we are aware of, but it is just possible that the claim was made in an attempt to emphasise the reliability of his own work which, unchecked, would presumably have been based very much on his own experience, personal notes if he had any with him, and his memory. Some features on the charts suggest that his memory was not entirely reliable. If one compares his charts with those of Waghenaer, it does not look as though he had seen them, and, moreover, Lambert's would seem to be more accurate and more detailed.

2. THE DOCUMENTS.

2.1. *Transcription of Jo: Jones' letter to Father Robert Persons.* This letter was dated in El Puerto de Santa María, near Cadiz, 9 March 1594. (Madrid, Museo Naval, Ms. 579, doc. 5).

'Right reverende good ffather

Most humble dutye remembered toustinge (sic) of yo^r ffatherhodes good helthe w^{ch} god longe contynue to yo^r harts desire and [y]o^r great comfort: I was in g^t good hope this wynter past to haue seen Madrill [Madrid] to haue doñ my dutye for the manye frendships & fav^s receyved of yo^r ffath^d and the rest of my good ffrendes to w^{ch} ende my generall at his dep[ar]ture hence gauē me lycence but the chefest matter wantinge (w^{ch} is money) I must deferre yt till an other wynter & haue pacyence, ffor god be thanked there is owinge us so mucche and so many payes behynde that it is lamentable to see the myserye that passeth here, w^{ch} to write is greefe wthout remedye or relyfe. Here for many dayes since wee haue had news that his Ma^{tie} prettendeth to make another Armada w^{ch} gladeth us mucche, hoping yt be for the remedye of [illegible] Countrye (w^{ch} God graunt,) thoughte thaye saye not whether or for what place And hereupon M^r Lambert the pylott hath requested me as his most humble dutye of cōmenacōns to yo^r ffath^d remembred to take the paynes as to sett down and write these 4 harbour^s & plottes wth there discripcōns according to his smalle skyll & greate good will as one that hath ben bred & borne about them, and whose trade of lyfe hath bene alwayes at see and therefore thinke him self commptable [obs. 'competible' = competent] of his knowledge & experience; Not that he putteth himselfe in counsell, before he be called; or that he thinketh yo^r ffath^d to be wthout sufficient plotte or instruccōns when tyme shall require; Neither that he presumeth to be more singular then manye others; But to present yo^r ffath^d herewth as A tythe of the frute of this yeres wynteringe alande and to shoue him selfe as forwarde as anye in so wissed a service justifyinge them, corrected & conferred wth manye good draughts and plottes, wherein he doubteth not but yo^r goodnes will p[ar]dōn his boldness, and accept of his good will. Besechinge yo^r ffath^d herewth to consider, and remember that his profession is Pilot, of wydesees, and that his breedinge upp[~] hath bene alwayes in shippes, and not in Gallyes Neither canne frame him selfe thereto or lerne ought of there p[y]latinge but rather forgett that w^{ch} with manye yeres travell & perill he hath gott & observed (seeinge that betwene these two manners and navigacōn is as mucche difference as between wallenutts and filberdes, and therefore wold desire yo^r ffath^{ds} helpe when tyme offereth to passe him over to the kings shippinge, when he trusteth to be of much better service. Requestinge yo^r ffath^d to favo^r us so much as to write us the receyte hereof So recomendinge yo[~] to the Almightye, and us to yo^r ffath^[ds] good prayers.

Yo^s alwayes to cōmande
[signed] Jo: Jones'

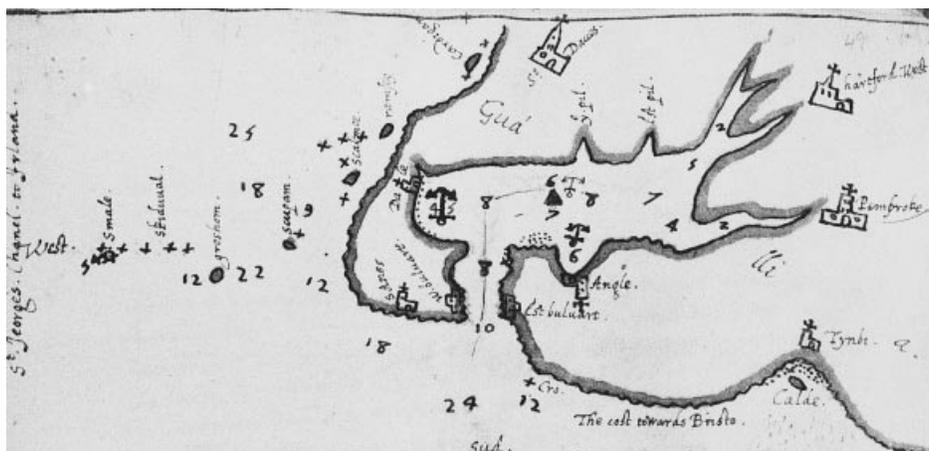


Figure 3. Milford Haven and approaches (1594) by N. Lambert (Courtesy of the Museo Naval, Madrid; Ms 579, doc. 5). For its time the sketch outline of Milford Haven itself is quite good, and the positioning of *Smale* (The Smalls), *skiduaal* (Hats and Barrels), *greshom* (Grassholm), *scupam* (Skokholm), *scalmee* (Skomer) and *ramsey* not too bad, but the outline of the coast outside the harbour is poor, and on quite a different scale. St Bride's Bay virtually does not appear at all, and Cardigan Island is shown as off *St Daves* (St David's). The name *Guá / ili / a* (Wales) astride Milford Haven looks as though it was added by another hand for the benefit of Don Juan de Idiáquez and Philip II. For details concerning the names *smale* and *skiduaal* see Richardson, W. A. R. (1994). The Smalls, Hats and Barrels: navigational and toponymic hazards. *Nomina*, 17, 71–97.

2.2. *Translation of an extract from a letter written in Spanish by Father Robert Persons to Don Juan de Idiáquez, dated 15 February 1596.* If, as implied in Jones' letter, Lambert's charts and notes were sent to Persons in March 1594, one wonders why it was only in February 1596 that he sent them to Idiáquez. It is evident from Persons' letter that Lambert was in contact with him in the interval. Perhaps it was Lambert's appeal to him to pull strings on his behalf that reminded him to forward them to Idiáquez.

'because I am leaving here shortly, I am sending you a present that consists of some papers which were sent to me in English about some ports in England, Ireland and Scotland, with specific advice from the pilot Lambert who is in Lisbon, and is a very intelligent and experienced man, and very trustworthy and he has had some very fine ships made like the Queen's galleons so I have been told, and in view of the current situation, it could be that these papers would be of some use to you, and so I send them to you translated, and leave the English because of the descriptions and paintings [i.e. charts]; the pilot writes to me that he has been told that he is to be sent on a certain voyage to Angola, and he is not going very willingly and he could be very useful for other things that may eventuate, it would be a good idea if the Conde de Portalegre were written to advising him to cancel this posting, if you approve...

Valladolid, 7 February 1596.

[Signed] Robert Persons'

2.3. *Lambert's English text accompanying his charts.* Comments provided in the Spanish translation made for Idiáquez are inserted in italics. Although Lambert's material was clearly intended to reach the Spanish government's hands, he formerly addresses it throughout to 'your fatherhood' (Robert Persons). The handwriting of the Spanish translation is not that of either Persons or Jones.

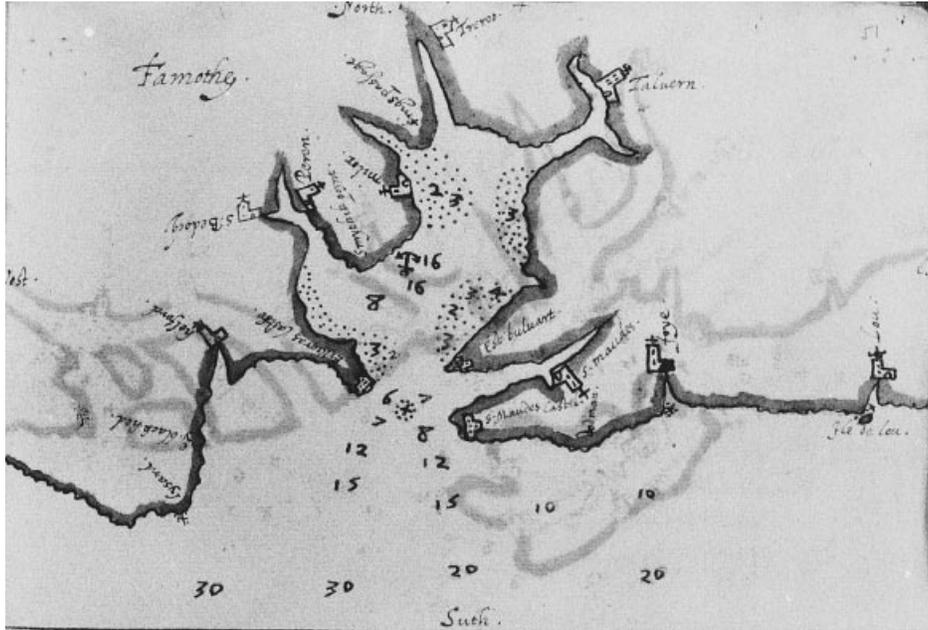


Figure 4. Falmouth (1594) by N. Lambert (Courtesy of the Museo Naval, Madrid). We do not know how long Lambert had been out of Britain, but his memory is clearly at fault in siting *S. Maudes Castell* (St Mawes Castle) on the wrong promontory, and a few other names are mislocated. Pendennis Castle he appears to name *Filligras Castle*, though the initial letter is not all that clear; this is evidently an error for *Killgrew's*, from the name of the family who owned the site. As with the Milford Haven chart, the harbour, for the time is quite well depicted, but the accuracy of the coast outside it leaves much to be desired, and the scale is quite different; see the positioning of *c. dodman* (Dodman Point), *foye* (Fowey) and *lou* (Looe); one wonders why *Ile de lou* is written, rather than 'of'. It is impossible to say whether the fathom markings are anywhere near accurate on any of the charts. Captain James Cook was still complaining about pilots and cartographers inventing them in his time. It is interesting to compare this chart with two pictorial-style maps in the British library. One vast one, (Cotton MS. Augustus I.i. 35, 36, 38, 39) covers from Exeter to Land's End and Scilly Isles, 1539–40; partially reproduced in P. D. A. Harvey, *Maps in Tudor England*, London, 1993, endpapers; note Pendennis Castle portrayed, unnamed, with the inscription 'not made'. The other map (Cotton MS. Augustus I.i.37) of a few years later, covers Falmouth Harbour after Pendennis and St Mawes Castles had been built; reproduced in Harvey, Fig. 30.

1. The first harbo^r or haven of the foure is Milforde haven
 - .1. Towchinge the discripcon whereof & accordinge to this my draught yo^r ffath^d shall understande yt in this manner followinge. The entraunce at the mouthe of the harbo^r lyeth Suth & North an ynglyshe mile in lenth and in wydeth a moskett shott over from lande to lande betwene the 2 old Bulwartz wth[out?] ordenance (at my comynge out of Englande) nor any castell of 30 mile about And wthin the harbour lyeth open. Est. & West. nyne myles of lenth & a mile in bredeth .at .5.7. & .8. fadom at lowe water, good ancoringe & wthout perill wthin the haven (the rocke called Milford & the angle banke in the Suth side that hath a fadome of water at lowe water) alwayes respected.
 - .2. Suth: shorte of the harbo^r there is no daunger, and the rockes and Ilandes in the draught] pricket lye West of Sⁱ. An's. as there they be discribed, the fardest of them into the see (w^{ch} is Smale) lyeth .5. leagues of lande w^{ch} alwayes is drye. and hath close by him 54. fadome water/
 - .3. Milford. haven lyeth .North. & biest [i.e. 'north & by east': the translator misread biest as 'west', so mistranslated the direction as *noruest* ('northwest')] from Cape Prior by

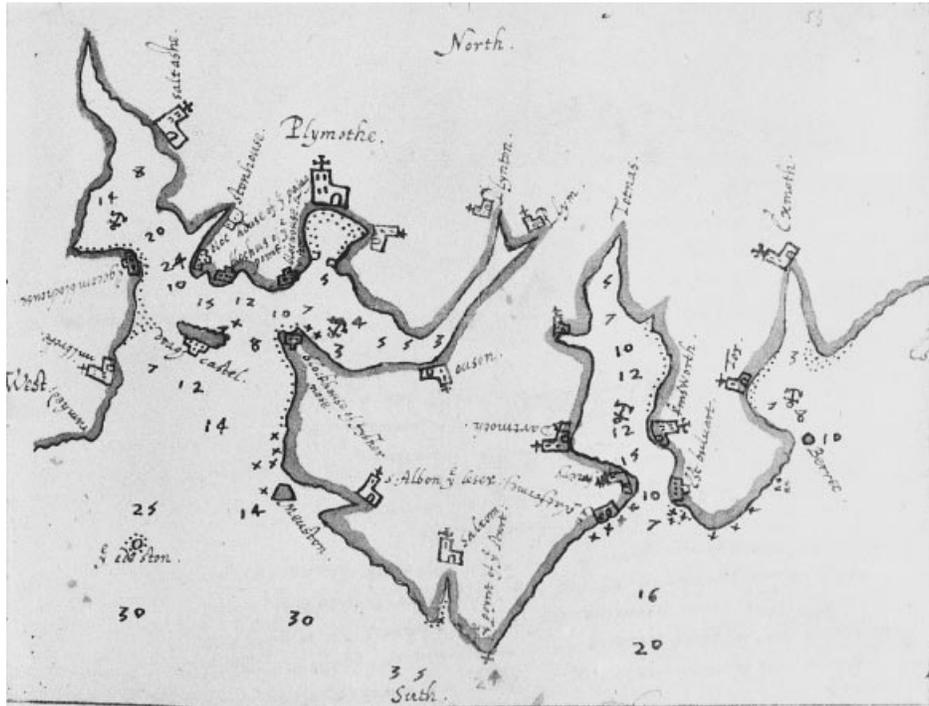


Figure 5. Plymouth and Dartmouth (1594) by N. Lambert (Courtesy of the Museo Naval, Madrid). Compare the depiction of Dartmouth with another part of the vast panoramic map (Brit. Lib. Cotton MS. Augustus. I.i. 35, 36, 38, 39); partially reproduced in Harvey, Fig. 32. Memory is again presumably responsible for *kinsworth* for Kingswear. The *Mariners Mirror* had *Kingswere*. Much of the information seems the result of personal knowledge, especially the location of fortifications.

faroll [El Ferrol] on Galicia some .126. leagues or thereabouts. and the straightest rutt or course betwene Spaine .&. Englande. And a great chaunce yf in all the waye of this rutt the Armada. mette wth the enymye but maye be in Milford. before they in Englande heare thereof. And the countrie litle inhabited & lesse fortified. And Sir John Paratte lande/ [who was governor of Ireland, and they held him prisoner on suspicion of dealing with Spain and he died in prison this very year].

4. Yf the wynde hange Westerly & blowe muche that the Armada cannot gett Milford n[or?] kepe at sea, then haue they Monts baye {Mount's Bay} for freynde. a good rode for all westerlye wyndes, in .4. fadome water, some .28. leagues of Milford / And yf Easterlye & overblowe that yo[~] cannot enter the harbo^r of Milford then haue yo[~] a good rode wthin the Tower of Waterford in Irland; at .8. & .10. fadome water, wthout peril[l] by lande or see: 23. leagues from Milford./
5. But to come to the most principales poynts. and gevech me muche reason to sa[y] & presume accordinge to my smalle skylle that this harbo^r is mother & best of all harbo[~]s & havens about Englande and sureth for his Ma^{ties} armye; safe in harbo^r agaynst all stormes & daungers of the enymye by see or lande. and may dep[ar]te or abide at his choyce & pleasure; wherein these p[ar]ticulars are of speciall.
6. consideracōn; ffirst on the Easterlye p[oin]te wthin the harbo^r the Galliones & great shippes maye ancor at .6. or .7. fadome at lowe water. And westerlye in Dale rode wthin the harbo^r the galliasses & gallies wth the other smalle shipping maye ride at .4. or .5. fadome at lowe water, where runeth no currant, leaueing a myle in bredeth betwene the one and the other, where the tyde entreth in: straight in the mouthe of the harbo^r &

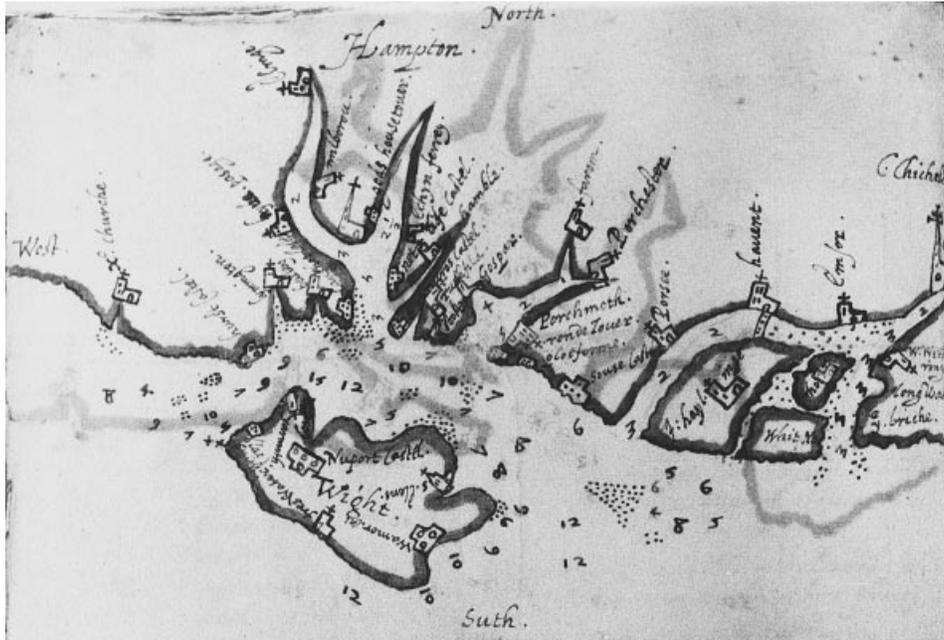


Figure 6. Isle of Wight, Portsmouth and Southampton (1594) by N. Lambert (Courtesy of the Museo Naval, Madrid). Though the shape of the Isle of Wight is somewhat strange, and *Portsea* (Portsea) is not shown as an Island, the whole of this stretch of coast is quite good, all the way from *X^e. churche* (Christchurch) to *y^e. briche* (presumable 'the breach', the entrance to Chichester Harbour). The vital importance of Chichester Cathedral's spire as a navigational landmark is clearly emphasised. Note the *ronde Tower* ('round tower') at the entrance to *Porchmoth* (Portsmouth) harbour, the *gun plotforme, souse* (Southsea) *Castel*, and the array of other castles on the Isle of Wight and in Southampton Water.

shooteth on the North. shore & so runeth Eastward vpp the harbo^r, (accordinge to the lyne drawn in the mothe of y^e harbo^r) in suche wyse that yf the enymye should sende in any artificiall fyers by shippis, or be so hardye as to putt in, the tyde ytself casteth them on the North shore wth wrack & losse, & of force must passe in the middest of the Armada. wthout daungeringe thereof./ And on Angle side betwene the old Bulwart & the inner poynt fortyfied, w^{ch} maye easely be don[~], wilbe to much effect w^{ch} I leave to yo^r ffath^{rs} better Judgem^t./ [lit. tr. of the Spanish tr. *if the eastern side were fortified between the bulwark and the point it would be of great importance*].

- .7. But on the other side west of the harbo^r from S. Anēs. to Dale [*as can be seen on the paper, there is*] a playne lande some myle & a haulfe in lengthe & a mile in bredeth, maye be safely taken & fortified & kept against all the worlde and turned to great succo^r & service of the Armada. Consideringe that [*'from' deleted*] at Dale from see to see ys but a necke of lande some faucon shott over. Where the Earle of Richemonde [*who afterwards gained the kingdom under the name of Henry VII grandfather of this queen*] entred & ditched yt w^{ch} to this daye appeareth (And it maye be wth yo^r good pardoñ, that where the grandfather gott all, the Nece [Engl. for 'granddaughter' until c. 1600] maye lease alle). wthin thys peace of lande is bredd muche cattel, good water muche corne & so...farre from the enemyes po^r & many Catholikes in my tyme. On the west from S^t. Daues is a hye stepe clyffe where no man came vpp nor downe. & .30. or .40 fadome water harde on shore [*where ships of any kind can arrive. This is all that occurs to me about this port*].

2. The seconde is Famothe.
- .1. This harbo^r as maye well appeare by my draught is a verye goode Rode and hath .16. fadome water wthin the harbo^r; But herewth hath dyvers daungers & discomodyties./ ffirst, the entraunce is wide a myle over from lande to lande; & hath no defence in the waye from the see, to the breeke and kepe of foule weather, w^{ch} bringeth in a hye and foule see vpōn the shipps w^{ch} everye Southerly wynde causeth:/
 - .2. Secondlye, at the entraunce on the Eastside a Castēll & a bulwarke wth muche orden^ance./ And on the westside another well provided/.
 - .3. Thirdly, the Enymye maye entre at his pleasure or turne in their fyerworks. when they lyst wth all Southerly wyndes, not to be avoyded the sea goinge so hye; And yf the Armada (being once wthin this harbo^r) should once geve over their stande & rode; they have no remedye ells where, but are lost/.
 - .4. Lastlye where the shipps ride, ys no rode or lyinge for gallies or other smalle shippinge; but they must of force goo vpp hier into the harbo^r, to their no smalle perill; and where the one cannot helpe the other; and the Enymye is well inhabited, and wyde; & no place well to be kept w^{ch} I leave to yo^r better consideracōn/.
3. The Thirde harbo^r is Plymothe. and conteyneth the same draught Dartmothe also.
- .1. Plymothe famos to all men[~] for the goodnes & suertye of the harbo^r & no les notorius for the strengthe and defence that is founde there/ And hath 24. fadome at lowe water wthin the harbo^r To entree therein is required litle wynde by cause the entraunce is crooked. And are to passe by .6. castells or bulwarks, the strongest in all Englande & best furnysshed (w^{ch} yo^r ffath^d maye better vnderstande then I/. together all the force of England bende./ greatly enhabited & never wthout many shippes & some of the Quenes/.
 - .2. And touchinge dartmoth. thoughte yt be a singular and good harbo^r wthin & muche water .12. fadom water: yet the entraunce is so narrowe that the shipps must enter one after another & the hills take awaye the wynde, so that the shipps must be tooed to their rode. And therefore I leave yt wth this my sensure that yt is not for the purpose/.
4. The fourth is the Ile of Wight and the harbo^rs of the mayne lande wthin/.
- .1. Wthin the Ile of Wight, and the mayne lande maye any Armye [for 'Armada'] really entre & ryde where are manye good rodes for all wyndes, shyfting their rodes, and wthout daunger of Castell or Bulwarke/ but the lande is stronge & full of people, & in my opynion the kings Armada shall hardly recover the Ilande of Wight, before they meete wth the Enymye; and meatinge once shall hardlye after take or gett any harbo^r wthin the Realm of Englande so easelye./ And further I dare be bold to saye that vnlesse yt be one of these foure harbo^rs w^{ch} are sure & good in all weathers, there is not in Englande to receave an Armada real; & wthall I thinke no man wilbe so vnwyse as to take a playe for a service of so great moment/. And to pretende for Douer or the Temes mouthe, besides the meetinge wth the Enymye the vyolent currents & stormes that are ordynarye & perryllous in straighte, where shipps want see rome; there are manye deadlye shelves, sandes & rocks w^{ch} geve infynite & emynent daunger, w^{ch} I should vuterlye diswade from; seinge the perills be so apparent & manyfest/.
5. My bolde opynion of other harbo^{rs} that are to receyve an Armada ryall.
- .1. Ffirst in Irlande the best is kinsale & lyeth. Suth. & North frōm Spayne a verye good haven & landelocked for all weathers, 4. leagues from Corke. temperate & fertill & hath nebo^rhod of manye other good Towns/. There be also other harbo^{rs} the one Baltamore, the other Berehauen, but they be broken Ilandes farre from any good Towns/.
 - .2. In ffrance. The best is Brest w^{ch} is the chefest in āll Brettanie, and then Bluet [i.e. the estuary of the R. Blavet; now the roads of Lorient] is next, and other safe harbo^rs are not in all that cost one or other. In Gasgonie [Gascony] the River of Burdeux. [Bordeaux, i.e. the Gironde, estuary of the Garonne] but most Perrylous; And then St Martines [St Martin on NE coast of the Île de Ré] wthin the Islandes of Rochel [La Rochelle];
 - .3. In Scotlande. The Loughe or soundes of Reyne [Loch Ryan by Stranraer] and Lafoyle [Lough Foyle, in N. Ireland] a standinge water wthin these harbo^{rs}, but they lye farre North. and is a longe course are to mete great Currants & manye rocks;/.' [sic]

2.4. *English translation of a summary of Lambert's opinions.* The handwriting of the Spanish of this résumé is that of the writer of the Spanish translation of Lambert's chart notes above. Both were made for Idiáquez.

'Opinion of the same pilot Lambert concerning what galleys can do in England. With the news that 4 of His Majesty's galleys which were in *Bretaña* (Brittany) had caused some damage in the west of England in the month of August of last year, 95,³² the pilot Lambert wrote to Father Persons [informing him of] the great pleasure that it had given him, adding that he hoped that with this event, those here [in Spain] would be more encouraged to cause the heretics more trouble by the same means, and with larger forces, since this is the real way to wear them down, and make the English feel the war, which hitherto they had not.

As a result the said priest [Father Persons] replied to him that he should put in writing, with much secrecy and in confidence, all that he thought about the matter, and the pilot did so, for he is a very trustworthy and knowledgeable man in these matters, and he wrote a very long communication in English, but the main points are the following: firstly, as the details that have to be taken into account in such a matter are so many, and cannot all be communicated in writing, he himself wishes to be employed in the undertaking, since he knows all the ports and details of English waters, having been occupied in this profession all his life.

Secondly, he says that there are three channels where galleys can sail in the three months of summer, that is, June, July and August, and these are the Plymouth channel between England and France, the Bristol channel between England and Wales, and St George's channel between England and Ireland.

Thirdly, he says that in the first, Plymouth channel, galleys can proceed in the said three months with considerable safety, as there are many good places to shelter in, if there are experienced pilots to guide them as far as the Isle of Wight, and that even if some of the Queen's galleons were out in the channel, they would not be able to cause them much harm, but as this English coast is well populated and defended, especially as one approaches the said island, to make any significant attack, at least two thousand soldiers should be carried for landing, and no attack should be undertaken that cannot be completed in 24 hours.

The ports for large fleets in this channel are *famo* (Falmouth), *plinmo* (Plymouth), *Dartemo* (Dartmouth) and *la ysle de Vight* (the Isle of Wight), the places to receive galleys are 1. *Montesbay* (Mount's Bay), 2. *Hilfold* (Helford), half a league before *famo*, and it is the best place for galleys in the whole of that channel since once in the port no damage can be done to them by sea or land.

Twelve leagues further up the channel from *Hilford* (sic), there is the port of *foy* (Fowey), where there is a good place for galleys, since they can anchor in the river at low tide, but as the river is not very wide they can be attacked from the land, if the place is not captured by land [assault] which could easily be done, and there are many good ships always in the port.

There are beyond *foy* the ports and Shelters of *Loo* (Looe), 3 leagues from *foy*, and the bay of *torbay*, and then *exmo* (Exmouth), *Apsam* (Topsham), *Lim* (Lyme Regis), *Veymo* (Weymouth), *Micromage* (Kimmeridge?),³³ *Studland*, *poul* (Poole) and *la ysle de Vight*, all have their advantages in different weathers and [at different] seasons, and one can make use of all of them.

Beyond *la ysle de Vight* towards the mouth of the river *temes* (Thames), although there are some places where galleys can shelter, he is nevertheless of the opinion that it is not advisable to venture there, as the currents are very strong, and the shelters less safe than other places, and it is very far to return, nor is there on the coast of *flandes* (Flanders) anywhere that can receive galleys, as this pilot especially emphasises, naming the places, both on the Flemish and English sides, and so is of the opinion that if it were not escorting a royal armada (which also, he says, would be dangerous in these parts) it is not advisable to send galleys further up the channel than *la ysle de Vight*. But from the most westerly point of the west of England as far as the said island he says that certainly galleys with two thousand men could do a lot of damage

to the English and safely retire and sack all those towns that are named herewith, which are all rich commercial towns and none is more than a league and a half from the sea, and the pilot offers his personal services to guide people by sea and on land to sack them, and he is quite certain that they will be successful. The places are in the following order beginning from the point of the land (i.e. Land's End) to *la ysla de Vight*, 1. *peren* (Peryn), 2. *foy*, 3. *loo*, 4. *salcom* (Salcombe), 5. *lime*, 6. *Veymoia*, 7. *poul*, 8. *bradin* (Brading, IOW), 9. *tichfild* (Tichfield), 10. *Hauand* (Havant), 11. *Brithenson* (Brighton), 12. *Hastin* (Hastings), etc.

In the second channel, which is of *Brestol*, he says, the same can be done much more easily as the land is more open, less populated and defended, and the market towns can be quite safely taken and sacked, even with fewer people than has been said [i.e. less than 2000] they are *san yuis* (St Ives), *padesto* (Padstow), *Bedisto* (Bude),³⁴ *Bediford* (Bideford), on the English side, and then, on the other, Welsh, side (*de Valia*), they are *tinby* (Tenby), *Carmartheu* [obvious n/u confusion], *penbroque* (Pembroke), *Harford Vest* (Haverford West), *Harison* (Haroldston on St Bride's Bay; Saxton's *Harreston*), *pothel* (Porthlysgi Bay, just south of St David's; Saxton's *Portelais*),³⁵ and some others of less importance.

All these towns, he says, can be easily taken with galleys with hardly any risk, nor does the queen have ships or other defence in that channel, but he says that it would not be safe to arrive at the city of *Bristol* with galleys because the river of *Bristol* is very narrow, and the land on either side very high, and so the people on land could do great damage with stones alone, and the currents at the mouth of this river, and at that of the great river *Seuern* which are nearly together, are so strong that they would endanger the galleys.

In the third channel, which is of *.s. jorge* (St George) between England and Ireland, he says that the galleys can proceed in the said months, and that on the English side there are many ports, beaches and shelters from 6 to 7 leagues distance [apart?], until reaching the city of *Chester*, where it will not be safe for the galleys to enter the port, as it is closed [as opposed to 'open', thus 'fortified'], but proceeding a little further, they can go up the river of *lirpol* (Liverpool), which is only three leagues by land from *Chester*.

On the Irish side there are ports of *Vaterford* (Waterford), *Vashford* (Wexford), *Deuling* (Dublin), *Dredath* (Drogheda), and further on towards *escocia* (Scotland) there are two islands called *lanbeth* (Lambay) and *yceris* (Skerries), near which ['and' erased] the galleys can be defended (sheltered?) in all weathers, and from *Chester* and *Lyrpole* (Liverpool) one goes to the large island of *man*, which belongs to the Count of *Darby*, which has many good shelters for galleys.

Eight leagues only from the island of *man* begins the kingdom of *escocia* (Scotland) where there are many good ports for both ships and galleys, but the port of *Loghren* (Loch Ryan, by Stranraer) is the main one, nor is there any better in all Christendom, since it could accommodate five hundred galleons at the same time, even if each were a thousand tons.

The market towns which can be suddenly taken and sacked on the English side of the channel of *.s. jorge* are *Baumarice* (Beaumaris) on the island of *Anglisy* (Anglesey), and even though it has a small castle, the pilot says one can risk coming to within half a league of the said castle, and disembark one's men by day or night, and reach the town without the castle causing one any harm. After this, on the mainland there are *Conouay* (Conway), *Learpol* (Liverpool), *Drigles* (Douglas) on the island of *man*, and on the Irish side are *Vashford* (Wexford) and *Dredath* (Drogheda), and finally this pilot says that he is so experienced in all these places, that he will be able to guide the galleys by night and by day, and he desires nothing more than to be engaged in one of these expeditions, and that with this hope [in mind] he refrains from narrating the thousand details that he knows of the above-mentioned places, their sites, fortifications, rivers, bridges and other such things, and he says, that by this means alone, if nothing else were attempted, the enemies will tire, although on the contrary also they would arm themselves better with these events, and it would be more difficult later to take the whole kingdom.'

20 January 1596.

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NOTES AND REFERENCES

- ¹ Lucas Jansz Waghener. (1584–85). *Spiegel der Zeevaerd*, Leyden. (The imprimatur granted by Philip II is dated 20th December 1579); facsimile reprint, Amsterdam, Israel-Meridan (TOT), 1964.
- ² Idem. (1588). *The Mariners Mirrour*, London. Facsimile reprint, Amsterdam, TOT, 1966. It was commissioned by the Lord Chancellor, Sir Christopher Hatton in 1587, and printed in London the following year, using the Latin edn. of 1586, which was dedicated to Elizabeth I.
- ³ Armando Cortesão and Avelino Teixeira da Mota. (1960). *Portugaliae Monumenta Cartographica*, Lisbon, vol. III, pls. 367A and B.
- ⁴ Christopher Saxton. (1992). *Christopher Saxton's 16th Century Maps*. Shrewsbury, Chatsworth Library.
- ⁵ Luisa Martín Merás. (1993). *Cartografía Marítima Hispana*. Barcelona/Madrid, Lunwerg Editores, 120–121, and Edward Luther Stevenson, *Portolan Charts*, New York, Hispanic Society of America, 1911, 62–63 and Fig. 20.
- ⁶ Archivo General de Simancas, Estado. Leg. 431, ff, 15 et seq.; reprinted in Enrique Herrera Oria. (1929). *La Armada Invencible*, Valladolid, 156–180.
- ⁷ British Library. Add. MS. 17,638.
- ⁸ Rodríguez-Salgado, M. J. (1991). Pilots, navigation and strategy in the *Gran Armada*, in Rodríguez-Salgado, M. J. and Adams, S. (eds), *England, Spain and the Gran Armada*, Edinburgh, Donald, 134–172.
- ⁹ Martin, C. and Parker, G. (1988). *The Spanish Armada*. Guild Publishing, London, p 228 states that 'The *Derrotero* and charts supplied by Philip II's cartographers to every ship in the fleet stopped at the Moray Firth'. This appears to be partially a misunderstanding of the name *Tierra bermeja*, literally 'Reddish Land', in the *Derrotero*, though I do not know what feature in the Moray Firth gave rise to this error. *Tierra Bermeja* is undoubtedly the name by which The Naze, near Harwich, was known to the Spanish, and The Naze is generally recognised as the northern extremity of the Thames estuary, and is the only feature mentioned in the *Derrotero* on the east coast north of a line from *Londres* (London) to *Tenete* (The Isle of Thanet). Concerning *Tierra bermeja*, see Richardson, W. A. R. (1997), Coastal place-names enigmas on early charts and in early sailing directions, *Journal of the English Place-Name Society*, **29**, 5–61; see especially 45–51.
- ¹⁰ Both in the manuscript version, fol. 12v, and in the printed version, *Drosey* (Durse Island, off the SW coast of Ireland) is mistakenly put for *Baldresay* in one context.
- ¹¹ *The Mercator Atlas of Europe*. (1998). Marcel Watelet (ed.), Pleasant Hill, Oregon, Walking Tree Press. On Mercator's map of Ireland they appear as *Skelmes*, map 7.
- ¹² Saint Michael is actually the name of one of the Skelligs but appears to have been applied by Spaniards to the nearby harbour and bay of Darrynane.
- ¹³ Venice, Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana, Incunabuli. V. 706. Reproduced in Konrad Kretschmer, *Die italienischen Portolane des Mittelalters*, Berlin, 1909; repr. Hildesheim, George Olms, 1962, 420–552.
- ¹⁴ *Le routier de la mer*, attributed Pierre Garcie; facsimile reprint in D. W. Waters (ed), *The Rutters of the Sea*, New Haven and London, Yale University Press, 1967, 137–169.
- ¹⁵ Jan Seuerszoon. (1532). *De Kaert vander Zee*. repr. (ed. J. Knudsen), Copenhagen, Gad, 1914.
- ¹⁶ *Le portulan contenant la description tant des Mers du Ponent depuis le detroit de Gibeltar iusques a la Shiuse de Flandres...*, Aix-en-Provence (1577). (attributed to Ca da Mosto); Boston, John Carter Brown Library, H577, P853p.
- ¹⁷ Pierre Garcie. (1521). *Le grand Routtier et Pylottage*. Facsimile of the 1521 edn in D. W. Waters, 205–400.
- ¹⁸ Robert Copland. (1528). *The Rutter of the See*. Editions from the 1540s onwards included Rycharde Proude's *A new Routter of the Sea*; facsimile of the 1566 edn in D. W. Waters, 49–134.
- ¹⁹ *The Safeguard of Sailors, or Great Rutter*. (1584). London; facsimile reprint, Amsterdam, TOT, and Norwood, New Jersey, W. J. Johnson, 1976.
- ²⁰ For example, a certain fisherman of la Coruña, Domingo de Lago, was interrogated by the authorities

in his home town in July 1588, just before the Armada's departure from there. He stated that he and one other man had been captured by an English ship offshore and taken to Plymouth, where he spent 25 days. He was interrogated, but was allowed to wander around wherever he liked and, astonishingly, was given a conducted tour of the warships in the harbour by the master of the ship that captured him. He was even taken aboard one of them (Archivo General de Simancas. Estado. Leg. 165, fol. 272, published in Herrera Oria, 230–232). Similarly, a Portuguese, Diego Affonso, master of a ship returning to Lisbon from Brazil, was captured by English 'corsairs' and taken to *Antona* (Southampton) in July 1588. On his return to Lisbon via France, he provided his interrogators with what information he had managed to pick up concerning Drake and English ship movements. (Archivo General de Simancas. Guerra antigua. Leg. 222., published in Herrera Oria, 28–29).

²¹ Madrid, Biblioteca Nacional, MS. 5785, sketch map.

²² Simancas. Estado. Leg. 165. Fols. 222–224; published in Herrera Oria, 370–378.

²³ Martin and Parker (see note 9 above) is one of the most interesting accounts of the Armada (1588).

²⁴ Simancas, Estado. Leg. 596. Doc. 91, 1–4.

²⁵ Wernham, R. B. (1994). *The Return of the Armadas. The Last Years of the Elizabethan War Against Spain, 1595–1603*. Oxford.

²⁶ For details of post-1588 edns of the *Spiegel* see C. Koeman (ed.), *Atlantes Neerlandici*, Amsterdam, TOT, 1970, vol. IV, 465–501.

²⁷ Lucas Jansz Waghenaer. (1592). *Het Thresoor der Zeevaert*, Leyden. Facsimile, Amsterdam, TOT, 1965.

²⁸ Charts drawn by Robert Adams in 1588 were engraved by Augustine Ryther and published in London in 1590 under the title *Expeditionis Hispanorum in Angliam vera descriptio*.

²⁹ Archivo General de Simancas, Estado. Leg. 180, unnumbered document. It contains: (a) sailing directions for the coasts of England and Wales, from the Scottish border, via the Welsh coast, the Bristol Channel, the Scilly Isles, the Channel coast to Dover, and thence north as far as Berwick; (b) Irish sailing directions; and (c) a covering letter from Don Martín de Padilla to Don Martín de Idiáquez which precedes both sets.

³⁰ Loomie, A. J. (1963). An Armada pilot's survey of the English Coastline, October 1597. *Mariner's Mirror*, vol. 49, 288–300. His bibliographical notes are useful. The translation, however, and some notes are not altogether reliable. For example, he correctly recognises *Blimori* as Beaumaris, but fails to realise that the author's description is not of Beaumaris, but undoubtedly of Holyhead, which is not named. He tentatively identifies *Chom* as Combe; it must be [Ilfra]combe. He identifies a castle named *Chalsin* as Chelsey Castle, when from the position given, it is undoubtedly Calshot Castle. He misunderstands the passages about Wolf Rock and rounding the North Foreland. He translates *Abas* as though it were *uvas* 'grapes' when it was actually [*h*]abas, 'beans'. Not surprisingly, perhaps, he does not recognise the now long-obsolete, English, *estan bi nor* (sic) rendering it 'northwards', when it is actually 'east and by north' (E by N).

³¹ Madrid, Museo Naval, Ms 579, doc.5.

³² This is clearly a reference to the raid, actually on 24 July 1595, in which four galleys from Blavet landed men in Mount's Bay. Newlyn, Mousehole and Penzance were burnt.

³³ There is no port, harbour or bay on this bit of coast with a name vaguely resembling *micromage*. It seems probable that *micromage* is a miscopying by the Spanish scribe of Lambert's falsely remembered version of *Kimmeridge* (Bay), in which the *m* and *c(k)* had been transposed.

³⁴ Bude Bay, which is between Padstow and Bideford, was recorded as *Bede baye* on Saxton's map of Cornwall, and as *Beeds hauen* on John Speed's one (1610). It seems certain that Lambert's *bedisto* is his version of Bude to which he added *sto(w)* (the Old English place-name element meaning 'assembly place, holy place'; cf. Padstow, Chepstow etc.).

³⁵ Neither *Harrison* nor *pothel* were places worth raiding. It looks as though the person who condensed Lambert's text misunderstood him; his original almost certainly recommended Haroldston and Porthlysgi (Bay) as suitable landing places for raiding Haverford West and St David's respectively. The form *pothel* suggests that the last syllable of Saxton's version *Portolais*, as on his 1578 map of *PENBROK*, was taken to be an abbreviation for 'island' and omitted. The naming of such small places inevitably suggests local knowledge, or access to fairly detailed maps (Saxton's?).

³⁶ Some of the places Lambert recommends for sacking are strange. Titchfield and Havant, for example, are far too close to Portsmouth for them to have been raided without the navy having been alerted; and was Pembroke's XIIIth century castle in no fit state to be a problem?