

The Art & Archaeology of Privateering: British Fortunes & Failures in 1744

Sean A. Kingsley

Wreck Watch Int., London

Two shipwrecks discovered by Odyssey Marine Exploration in the English Channel in 2008 are embedded in the history of the War of the Austrian Succession (1739-48) and specifically the year 1744. The First Rate Royal Navy warship HMS *Victory* was lost in the western English Channel on 5 October that year, while returning from escorting to sea one outgoing commercial convoy and liberating another blockaded down the River Tagus in Lisbon.

The date of 1744 inscribed on the bell recovered from Site 33c in the same part of the Channel, alongside the name *La Marquise de Tourny*, revealed that Odyssey had also discovered the wreck of a Bordeaux corsair launched in the year when France joined the war. Both ships actively participated in the protection of trade and the art of privateering. This article contextualizes both wrecks by examining the objectives, character, structure and scales of privateering and securing prizes during the War of the Austrian Succession before discussing the few comparable wrecks to assess whether it is realistic to refer to an archaeology of privateering.

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1. Introduction

The year 1744 occupies an emotive year in both Britain's maritime history and in the recent fieldwork of Odyssey Marine Exploration. In May 2008 the company discovered the wreck of Admiral Sir John Balchin's *Victory*, the finest early Georgian flagship and First Rate of kings George I and George II that was lost during a storm in the western English Channel on 5 October 1744 (Cunningham Dobson and Kingsley, 2010). In the same waters Odyssey also located Site 33c, whose bell identified the wreck as the remains of *La Marquise de Tourny*. Although this Bordeaux-based corsair also probably succumbed to the elements in the late 1740s or early 1750s (Cunningham Dobson, 2010), by a twist of fate the bell's inscription reveals that this ship was launched in 1744.

As one ship started its life, another vanished under the most tragic of circumstances. Nevertheless, the histories of both are intertwined in the War of the Austrian Succession and by privateering in a year of extreme highs and lows. On 29 March 1744 King George II had issued a declaration of war against the French king. The long-brewing war and signing of letters of marque had brought great expectations to the captains and crews of privateers, a romantic profession that gripped the imagination of the public. As the *Gentleman's Magazine* announced from Bristol in September 1744:

“Nothing is to be seen here but Rejoycings for the Number of *French Prizes*, brought into this Port. Our Sailers are in

high Spirits and full of Money; and while on Shore spend their whole time in carousing, visiting their Mistresses, going to Plays, Serenading, &c. dressed out with laced Hats, Tossels, Swords with Sword-Knots, and every other jovial way of spending their Money.”

In early autumn 1744 Britain was still riding the crest of a wave of patriotic pride. The rejoicing had started on 15 June 1744, when the 60-gun warship the *Centurion* glided undetected through both the fog and looming French fleet in the English Channel to slip into Spithead. Commanded by Commodore George Anson, the *Centurion* had just completed the most famous circumnavigation of the globe since the heady days of Sir Francis Drake. Despite an appalling loss of life and the entirety of the rest of his squadron, Anson returned home after three years and nine months with one of the greatest treasures seized at sea following an act of breathtaking privateering – as defined in its broadest sense. At Cape Esperitu Santo in Philippine waters the *Centurion* had taken the Spanish treasure ship *Nuestra Senora de Cobadonga*, loaded with 2.6 million pieces of eight. It was the most valuable prize seized during the War of the Austrian Succession (Figs. 1-6). Anson became a national hero (Heaps, 1973; Pack, 1960).

The *Cobadonga* was just one of many hundreds of enemy French and Spanish merchant vessels and corsairs boarded on the high seas in the name of king and country. *La Marquise de Tourny* is one of several examples of precisely the kinds of corsairs that chased the British and, in turn, were pursued. The war on trade was in fact not just private:



Fig. 1. The War of the Austrian Succession started successfully with Admiral Edward Vernon's capture of Porto Bello in November 1739, commemorated in a copper alloy medal. Photo: © National Maritime Museum, Greenwich, London (Inv. E3195-1 and E3195-2).

men of war were equally embedded in capturing prizes and Admiral Balchin onboard the *Victory* and his fleet attacked and seized merchant vessels during the cruise to Lisbon



Fig. 2. Lord George Anson (1697-1762), who circumnavigated the world between 1740 and 1744 to capture the *Nuestra Senora de Cobadonga*, the richest prize taken in the War of the Austrian Succession. Painting attributed to Thomas Hudson, pre-1748. Photo: © National Maritime Museum, Greenwich, London (Inv. BHC2517).

and Gibraltar between July and September 1744.

To date few wrecks of privateers of any nation have been surveyed or excavated. For the period under discussion, scientifically recorded and published sites are restricted to just four wrecks, all of which are French: two sites off La Natière in the infamous corsair haven of St. Malo (early and mid-18th century), Odyssey's Site 33c (late 1740s/early 1750s) and the *Machault* in the Gulf of St. Lawrence, Canada (1760). This article examines the structure, objectives and background to privateering in England around 1744, before comparing the above wrecks in an attempt to examine whether it is realistic to define an archaeology of privateering.

2. Historical Background

The War of the Austrian Succession (1739-48) was triggered by the pressures of 18th-century colonial trade between Britain and Spain, whereby distant lands were exploited primarily for the goal of commerce, rather than for forging civilization or building empires. A doctrine of monopoly was designed to maximize profits. Figures demonstrate that by 1750 England was importing 22% of its manufactured goods, 41% of its drink and tobacco and 36% of semi-manufactured goods (Clarkson, 1974: 128).

Produce was typically shipped raw, so the profits of processing materials into finished forms accrued to the home manufacturer. Exports in finished form from the colonies were discouraged by heavy import duties, which were prohibitively high for the natives of the West Indies: for instance, 15 shillings per counterweight for raw sugar



Fig. 3. *The Capture of Nuestra Señora de Cabadonga*. Painting by Samuel Scott.
Photo: © National Maritime Museum, Greenwich, London (Inv. BHC0360).

(muscovado), as opposed to £4.18s 8d for refined sugar. A similar disincentive prevailed through the Molasses Act of 1733 (Richmond, 1920: 1).

The colonial superpowers often operated beyond the line of the law. On the one hand England happily ignored the commercial restrictions formalized by the Treaty of Utrecht, notably in the case of the South Sea Company that exceeded its treaty rights and encouraged an extensive smuggling trade through the ports of North America (Richmond, 1920: 2). On the other, the Spanish coast-guard patrolling the Caribbean needed little incentive to flout legal niceties and intercept English vessels.

The tales of the Spanish *guarda-costas*'s crimes and misdemeanors saturated the British and American newspapers throughout the 1730s, infuriating Britain. Matters came to a head in October 1731, when Captain Robert Jenkins of the *Rebecca* was seized off Havana during a return trip from Jamaica to London with a shipment of sugar. As the *Pennsylvania Gazette* of 7 October 1731 reported (Swanson, 1991: 11):

“They broken all her Hatches, Lockers and Chests, in which finding nothing to their Purpose, their Lieutenant ordered

Capt *Jenkin*'s Hands to be tied, as also his Mate's, and seized them to the Foremast, and then cut and violently beat a Mulatto Boy (his Servant) to extort a Confession of there being Money in the Ship; but he confessing nothing, they began with Capt. *Jenkins*, putting a Rope about his Neck, and another about the Boy's, which they fastened to him, and hoisted them up to the Fore-Yard... and after keeping him hanging for a short space, they let him fall down again on the Deck, and asked him if he would not then confess where his Money was. But he still told them he had none; on which he was hoisted up a second time, and swiftly let down again, and being then asked the same Question, he replied as before, adding that they might torture him to Death, but he could not make any other Answer: They threatened to burn the Ship, and him and his People in it, for that they were obstinate Hereticks...

When he recovered, their Lieutenant came to him with Pistols and a Cutlass in his Hands, went to him, crying, Confess, Confess, or die... The Lieutenant then took hold of his left Ear, and with his Cutlass slit it down; and then another of the *Spaniards* took hold of it, but gave him the Piece of his Ear again, bidding him carry it to his Majesty King *George*. Others were then given for scalping of him, but finding his Head close shaved, they forbore executing that part of his Sentence.”

The attacks on British shipping were particularly acutely felt amongst the merchants and tradesmen of the City of London, who lobbied the government to issue letters of marque and reprisal (Anderson, 1995: 39). Seven years after his trauma at sea, Captain Jenkins was called to the House of Commons in March 1738 to display his severed ear in a carefully staged political show trial. Britain wanted satisfaction and once Spain failed to pay the £95,000 compensation for British losses in the Caribbean in the winter of 1738-9 under the Convention of El Pardo, matters reached boiling point and the memory of 1731 was rekindled to start the War of Jenkins' Ear (Swanson, 1991: 10). Although Britain formally declared war on 19 October 1739, letters of marque against Spanish trade started to be issued from July (Starkey, 1990: 120). The war with Spain seamlessly transitioned into the War of the Austrian Succession, and with France's entry into the fray in March 1744 England would be locked for nine years in the nation's purest ever trade war.

Due to the relative small sizes of naval fleets by modern standards, and the rarity of fleet engagements, privateers played a crucial role during wartime in disrupting enemy

commerce. Juxtaposed against the reality that the Battle of Toulon of February 1744 was the only major action of the war at sea was the endless scheming and swarming world of the individual entrepreneur. Outlawed since 1713, the privateers were back in business. Between 1739 and 1748 a total of 1,582 letters of marque would be issued authorizing British private vessels to engage enemy shipping (Starkey, 1990: 120).

3. The Structure of Privateering

As piratical as it sounds, privateering was a legal form of private enterprise in which individuals deployed their own resources to attack and seize vessels and the goods of foreign subjects, over which they acquired the rights to the property appropriated. The practice was not random, but was officially sanctioned under the law of the sea (Petrie, 1999). Privateering was a business opportunity, a tool of war and a factor of diplomacy between nations and has been subdivided into three categories, the Channel privateer, the deep-water private ship of war and the expeditionary force (cf. Starkey, 1990: 36, 38).

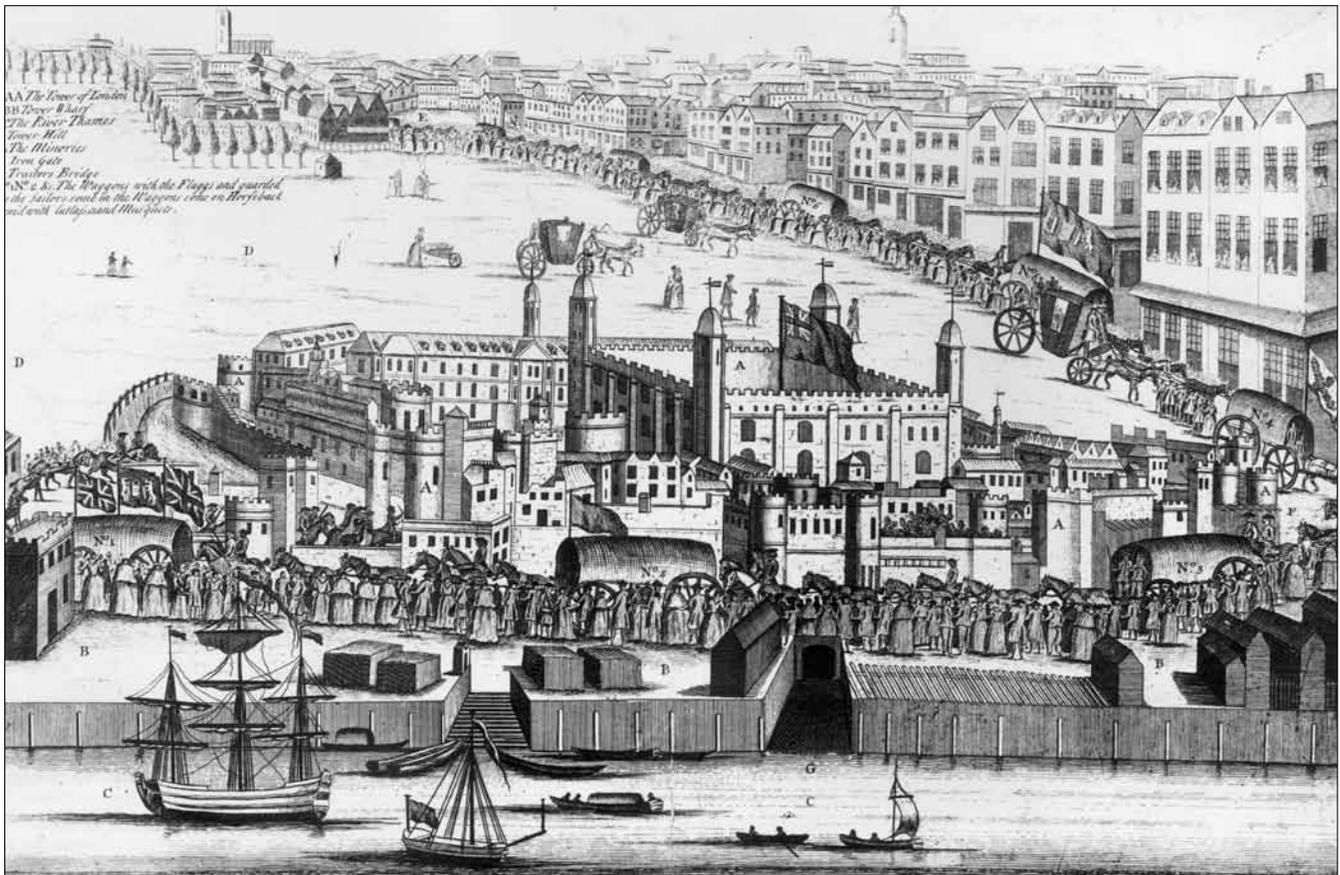


Fig. 4. Crowds cheer the 32 wagons of Spanish treasure captured by Commander George Anson from the *Nuestra Senora de Cobadonga* as they are transported to the Tower of London in 1744. Photo: Rischgitz/Getty Images.



Fig. 5. A King George II Lima half-crown minted in London as part of the currency struck from the Spanish silver captured by Admiral Lord George Anson from the *Nuestra Senora de Cobadonga* prize on 20 June 1743. Photo: National Maritime Museum, Greenwich, London (Inv. E3818-1 and E3818-2).

Controls over the profession included the necessity for privateer commanders to provide bail to guarantee the good conduct of their crews. This surety had been fixed in 1674 at £3,000 per vessel with 150 or more men and at £1,500 for a lesser complement. To ensure that a ship's capture was lawful, judges of the Admiralty Court demanded that between three and four members of a prize's crew, including the master and mate, were taken to the homeport to be sworn in, examined and interrogated. Local officials authorized by an Admiralty Court warrant required the captives to respond to a set of up to 34 'standard interrogatories', which had to be recorded within five days of a warrant's issue (Starkey, 1990: 24-5). Figures from the Vice-Admiralty Court for Massachusetts, Rhode Island, New York, Pennsylvania and South Carolina for the period 1739-48, when 148 of 192 privateer cases were won, demonstrate that while prize status was not guaranteed, in 77% of cases heard in this colony enemy ships were successfully condemned (Swanson, 1991: 42).

To deliberate on judgments Courts required supportive documentary data, including passes, sea briefs, charters and bills of lading from captured prizes. From the issue of a letter of marque to a prize's final condemnation, a privateer's business was completely sanctioned and controlled by the High Court of Admiralty (Starkey, 1990: 24-25). These legal formalities explain why so much information survives for the brother ship of *La Marquise de Tourny*, *Le Marquis de Tourny*, seized by the London privateer in 1748, and, conversely, why it would seem that the former Bordeaux corsair was probably never captured by the British.

Behavior at sea was expected to be highly disciplined, equaling Royal Navy standards. As the new Prize Act of 1744 demanded, "All offenses committed by any officer or seaman on board any privateer or merchant ship taking letter of marque, during the present war with Spain and France, shall be punished in such manner as the like offences are punishable on board his Majesty's ships of war". Regulations demanded that "swearing, Drunkenness and Prophaness be avoided" on privateers (Swanson, 1991: 67).

Despite these requisite strict measures, countries took every measure to encourage the art of privateering. Although the 1708 Prize Act remained the basis of law, whereby the Crown relinquished its right to shares in the profits of privateering and offered bounties to entrepreneurs engaged in the capture of enemy men of war (Starkey, 1997: 127), by a new clause of 1740 the navy paid crews of any British predator £5 sterling for every seaman on board an enemy warship (Swanson, 1991: 37).

Whereas the Crown and Admiralty had taken traditionally 3% of a prize, in the War of the Austrian Succession privateers were granted the entire property. The French followed suit in 1743, a development that had immediate results pending their declaration of war in 1744. As the *Pennsylvania Gazette* (27 October 1743) reported, this carrot was so advantageous that "Bretagne alone engages to fit out 500 Ships in Case of War with England." By 1748 the Dutch government incentivized its privateers by exempting its crews from naval impressment and by offering bounty money against French predators (Swanson, 1991: 15-16, 37, 221).



Fig. 6. A gold medal made by Thomas Pingo commemorating the Battle of Cape Finisterre in 1747 and Admiral George Anson's 1740-44 circumnavigation of the globe. Obverse: bust of Anson crowned by Victory on the prow of a galley. Reverse: Victory standing on a sea monster over a small globe and the legend 'CIRCVMNAVIGATION'. Photo: National Maritime Museum, Greenwich, London (Inv. E3354-1 and E3354-2).

The distribution of bounty secured from enemy prizes was rooted on the Convoys and Cruizers Act of 1708, which established the sliding scale of prize money for the next 100 years. The net sum was divided by eight. The captain received three-eighths, but if a prize capture was directed by a flag officer, one of those eighths diverted to him. Since this was generally the case, in reality a captain could expect a one-quarter split. Another eighth was divided equally amongst lieutenants, the captain of the marines and master. A further eighth went to the warrant officer, boatswain, gunner, carpenter, purser, chaplain, surgeon, master's mate, junior officers and quartermaster. An additional eighth was divided between the petty officers: the boatswain's mate, gunner's mate and tradesmen (caulkers, ropemakers, sailmakers). The rest was split among the remaining quarter (Hill, 1998: 201).

Compared to regular commercial trade, privateering was lucrative. The capture of a single prize of average value yielded an annual profit of more than 130% on the capital invested in a privateering venture (Swanson, 1991: 15-16, 37, 221). In an age when an able seaman received a salary of about £20 a year, £5,000 could set a man up for life (Hill, 1998: 178). Given that ordinary Spanish ships listed in the *Supplement to the Gentleman's Quarterly* of 1741 (Vol. XI: 698) were valued at 3,500*l.* per vessel, a captain of a privateer and his investors in theory could become rich overnight. (This article retains the original use of *l.*, the mid-18th century symbol of the British pound, as it appears in its original usage.) By 14 August 1744,

the *Daily Post* calculated that the prizes taken in the war since its start were valued at £3 million. The 308 French, 226 Spanish and 195 enemy ships of unrecorded nationality captured by American privateers alone in the North American colonies between 1739 and 1748 equated to a value of £968,972 (Swanson, 1991: 181).

A common source of quick revenue was accepting ransoms on captured ships, such as in the case of the *Mary* heading from Carolina to the Orkneys taken on 3 July 1744, which was ransomed for £1,000 sterling (*Gentleman's Magazine*, July 1744: 367). Sales, however, were by far the most common outcome. In the war years, both the sale of captured ships and cargo were advertized extensively in the English press, which published details about the name of the prize, composition of its consignments and location of auction 'by the candle' – most notably for prizes seized by Royal Navy warships (Figs. 11-14, 16). An entry in the *Daily Advertiser* of 25 July 1744 is typical of the entries:

*“For Sale by the CANDLE, At Garraway's Coffee-House in Exchange-Alley, on Wednesday the 1st of August, at Four O'Clock in the Afternoon,
219 Casks of French Sugars
About 15 Tons of Coffee,
7360 Pricks of Tobacco, more or less,
1 Cask of Indigo,
12 Rolls of Varinex Tobacco,
2 Cases of Citron Water,*



Fig. 7. The total volume of prizes of all nations taken during the War of the Austrian Succession, 1739-1748.

1 Case of Brass and Iron Locks, and Iron Ware. Being the Cargo of the Ship Chevalier Bart, from Martinico, taken by his Majesty's Ship Monmouth, Henry Harrison, Esq, Commander.

The above Goods to be view'd at Galley-Key from Monday the 30st instant to the Time of Sale, which will be begin at Twelve o'Clock.

Abraham Lestourgeon, *Broker, in Lawrence-Poultney-Lane.*"

The privateering war was global in scope. New World privateers sailed the Atlantic from Newfoundland to Florida and from the east coast of Mexico to French Cayenne. American cruisers chased prizes in the privateer-infested waters of Britain and Europe. Statistics published for 1745 reflect the scope of the seizures (*Supplement to the Gentleman's Quarterly*, 1745: 696). Of 565 Spanish and French ships carried by the English into 54 cited ports, 36 were brought into Dover, 35 into Lisbon, 24 into Leghorn, 20 into Rhode Island, 19 into Portmahon, 18 into Plymouth, 17 into Antigua, 16 into Barbados, 15 into Bristol, 14 into Jamaica and 11 into New York (with the names of 202 harbors not cited). Of 507 English ships seized by French and Spanish privateers and carried into 34 reported harbours, 71 were taken into St. Malo, 44 into Brest, 24 to Martinico, 23 into Porto Rico, 22 to Bayonne, 20 into Morlaix,

19 to Dunkirk, 11 to Hispaniola, 11 to Dieppe and 10 to Vigo (plus 180 harbor names not specified). Seemingly every patch of open water was fair game.

4. Scales of Privateering & Prizes

During the war of 1739-48 some 2,828 British privateers went to sea (Swanson, 1991: 26-7, 54) and just over 6,800 English, French and Spanish craft were seized by all sides. An abundance of newspapers of the age provide a compelling image of the scales and dynamics of privateering through both first-hand letters and journalistic news.

The *Gentleman's Quarterly* highlighted the rising threat in August 1740, when "The *Spanish* Privateers are all round our Coast, they have taken a Boat and two Sloops on the *Norman Coast*, treated the Passengers in a barbarous Manner, and left them quite naked, a Woman in particular they used most cruelly. These Rovers have no more than 40 Men in a Boat, but they row with sixteen Oars, and are upon you as soon as they are seen."

British unease was unabated in 1742 when an extract from a letter written in Bordeaux and published in the *London Evening Post* on 24 April reported that:

"By our last Letters from St. Sebastian's we are inform'd, there are no less than eight English Prizes lately carried in there;

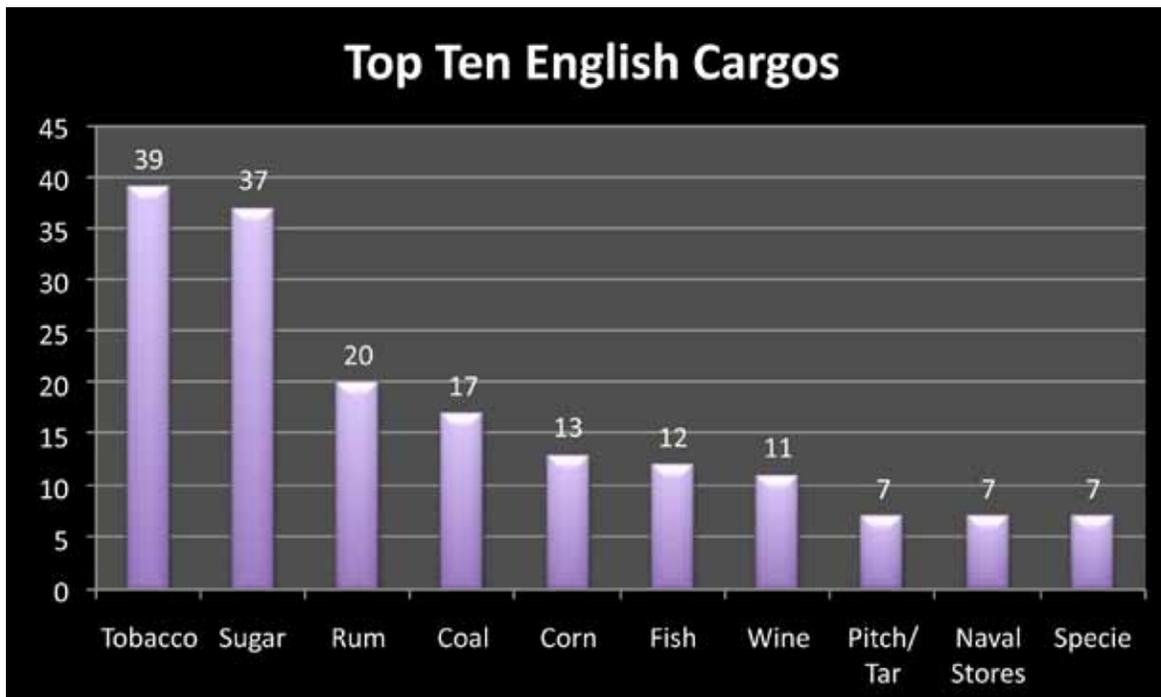


Fig. 8. The top ten most numerous English cargoes taken by the French and Spanish during the War of the Austrian Succession, 1739-1748.

one with Rice from Carolina; one outward bound for Newfoundland; one from Ireland for Madeira; two with Sugar from the American Plantations... The Capture of so many Ships lately by the Spaniards, scarce a Post arriving without a melancholy Account of more or less being taken, justly gives the Merchants great Uneasiness, and justifies the Reasonableness of their Complaints against the Misconduct of carrying on the War, the ill Effects of which daily appear, and will require some Time to rectify”.

Prize lists published consistently throughout the war over a total of 127 pages of the *Gentleman's Quarterly* provide a solid picture of the relative scale of seizures and losses, even if the quality of the data varies across time. In some issues nationalities, cargoes and the name of the capturing ship are meticulously reported, while in others such data is lacking. In some cases listings are published in condensed type across double columns on single pages, compared to the typical single column pages, with information seemingly sacrificed in favor of superior stories. A clear bias towards the careful reporting of enemy prizes taken is also obvious, whereas lists of English losses rarely furnish comparable details about cargo composition and wealth, presumably for purposes of propaganda and morale at the exclusion of the depressing truth about diminishing losses. Overall, however, the newspaper devoted remarkable

space to the war of privateering. This major primary set of data within the *Gentleman's Quarterly* comprises the source material for the quantification of the economics of privateering in the War of the Austrian Succession discussed in this article.¹

The balance of annual statistics demonstrates that no one nation won the privateering war. Up to 1741 Spain seized 337 ships, valued at 35,000*l.* each, amounting to a total prize value £1.179 million, while the English took 250 ships valued at £1.749 million for the same period (*Gentleman's Quarterly*, 1741). Overall, a total of 6,917 ships were seized on all sides between 1739 and 1748, or 6,809 if retaken English ships are factored into the equation (which crews presumably did not profit from, but were returned to the original owner).

Spanish and French forces captured a total of 3,493 English ships accounting for 51.3% of all prizes, whereas the English in turn took 3,316 Spanish, French and other enemy craft representing 48.7% of all losses. These consisted of 1,953 French ships (58.9% of all enemy prizes), 687 Spanish ships (20.7%) and 676 others (20.4%: 184 of non-French and non-Spanish nationality and 492 of unknown origin; Fig. 7). Rich cargoes were naturally the ultimate prey and only 1.0% of all ships captured during the war were sailing solely in ballast.

A. English Prizes

The character of a total of just 268 cargos of the 3,493 English ships captured is reported in the *Gentleman's Quarterly*, comprising 51 different types of commodity, which can be sub-divided into the following general categories:

- Alcoholic Drinks: 36 (13.4%)
- Ballast: 2 (0.7%)
- Foodstuffs: 100 (37.3%)
- Metals: 7 (2.6%)
- Non-Edible Dry Goods: 99 (36.9%)
- Very Rich Cargos: 14 (5.2%)
- War Shipments: 10 (3.7%)

The top three most extensive cargos taken were tobacco (39), sugar (37) and rum (20), which were often enormous shipments. The consignments are generally of international character and do not reflect uniquely English manufactured goods (Fig. 8). Exceptions include one cargo of cider and 17 of coal. The English prizes are not registered as having been particularly rich: of 14 high-value examples, just seven contained specie. Unsurprisingly, French and Spanish privateers logically sought as a preference incoming merchant vessels carrying exotic wares over long distances. Of the 268 English cargos registered, 111 originated in the West Indies and Americas (41.4% of the total English cargos).

The variety and scale of the losses were nevertheless impressive. In April 1746, for instance, 1,100 hogsheads of sugar and 10 tons of sugar being transported by the English *Dreadnought* and *Lyon* from Barbados to London were lost. While sailing between Africa and Jamaica with 354 slaves in May 1746, the *Fortune* of Liverpool was taken by a Martinico privateer and carried to Porto Cavallo. In the same month a shipment of stone quarried in Portland for the new Westminster Bridge was captured by a French privateer and ransomed for 200*l.*, and the 881 hogsheads of sugar captured on the *New Ranger*, Montserrat to London, and taken into Brest, was judged to be the most valuable sugar ship ever bound to England. Its quality was presumably superior to the above 1,100 hogsheads of sugar or the *Gentleman's Quarterly* reporters had short memories.

Irrespective of the fact that merchant vessels sailed in convoys to maximize safety, facilitate protection and to try to avoid being picked off individually by enemy predators, prizes captured in groups were not uncommon. In July 1746, 14 English sails were taken between Orkney and Shetland by just one French privateer of 20 guns, and further afield 40 sails from North America for the Leeward Isles were seized by Martinico privateers. A report of January 1747 describing the previous month referred to the prizes streaming into Bayonne, France, where "Within a

month past 30 English ships have been brought into this port, following one another like sheep. You may judge of the value of their fleeces by the following particulars, viz. 3500 hogsheads of sugar, 1200 hogsheads of tobacco, 5000 quintals of fish, several puncheons of rum, and a great quantity of beef..."

An example of a rich and politically sensitive seizure that held the potential to impact seriously the course of the war were the 24,000 zechins (gold Venetian coins) and diplomatic dispatches for the king of Sardinia captured by the French in August 1747. Onboard the same vessel, which was driven ashore at St. Remo, was an English admiral and General Schulemberg. A cargo of "horses and equipage of a nobleman" taken in November 1747 was an unusual prize, while the loss of the *Dominco d'Amico* of 24 guns in February 1748, en route from London to Naples and taken by the Algerines, was considered a particularly heavy blow. The loss to the merchants of Naples was computed at 100,000 ducats and to the merchants of Leghorn, London, and Civita Vecchia another 300,000 ducats. In January 1748 a cargo of 400 barrels of gunpowder and ordnance stores dispatched from the Tower of London for Plymouth was captured.

Privateering was not restricted to far off places; English craft were often pursued outrageously close to the shores of Britain. In November 1746 a French corsair took the brigantine *Duke of Cornwall* belonging to the Falmouth custom's house in Gerran's road near the port. December 1747 witnessed a French privateer of just four guns and 45 men seizing a boat laden with coal near Ardroth in Scotland, which it ransomed for "4 sheep, a leg of beef, and 72 bottles of ale..."

B. Spanish Prizes

The quantity of cargos captured by the English as reported amongst the 687 Spanish prizes in the *Gentleman's Quarterly* is about equal to those on English prizes. Although slightly larger at 280 cargos, the 41 different categories of consignments are more limited, being ten less numerous:

- Alcoholic Drinks: 9 (3.2%)
- Ballast: 1 (0.4%)
- Foodstuffs: 21 (7.5%)
- Metals: 13 (4.6%)
- Non-Alcoholic Drinks: 16 (5.7%)
- Non-Edible Dry Goods: 87 (31.1%)
- Very Rich Cargos: 100 (35.7%)
- War Shipments: 33 (11.8%)

The three most extensive cargos seized were war stores, such as ammunition, gunpowder and pistols (33), cocoa

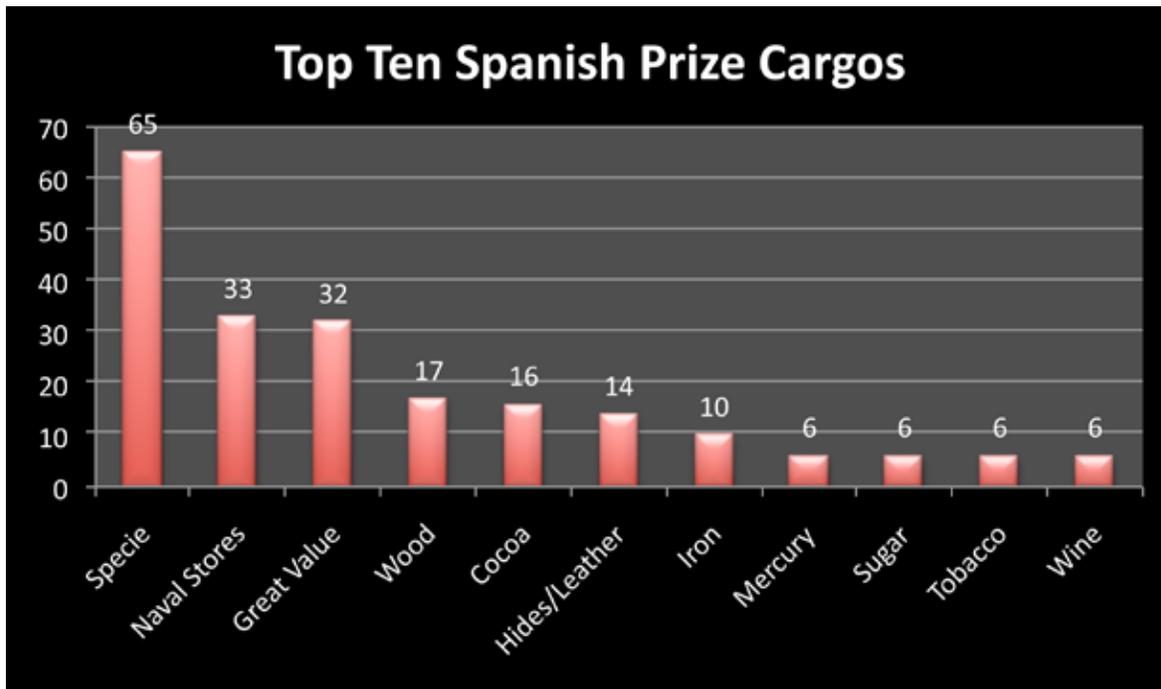


Fig. 9. The top ten most numerous Spanish cargoes taken by the English during the War of the Austrian Succession, 1739-1748.

(16) and hides/leather (14). This excludes monetary shipments, which naturally comprised a high ratio of Spanish prizes compared to English and French losses (Fig. 9). Some 32 cargoes and ships are simply described as very valuable or of great value, while 65 contained specie. Some 33% of Spanish prizes thus contained 'treasure', compared to 5.2% of English and 8.3% of French prizes. The chance of striking it rich by taking a Spanish ship was not literary hyperbole. Some 66 Spanish cargoes were Colonial (23.6% of total Spanish cargoes, excluding specie), and included both exotic and staple commodities such as cochineal, indigo, mercury, snuff, tortoiseshell, ostrich feathers and wood.

Cargoes taken by the English between September 1739 and December 1741 reflect the scales and character of the Spanish losses. In this period Admiral Haddock took one ship with 700 barrels of gunpowder and 10,000 arms and brass cannon valued at 11,000*l.*, as well as 100,000 pieces of eight in a register ship. In early 1745 the 350-ton, 16-gun *Maria Fortuna*, bound from Cadiz to Buenos Aires, was captured with a cargo value of 100,000*l.* and insured for 550,000 dollars. As a bonus its passengers included the Governor of Paraguay. The capture of dignitaries was a useful source of securing enemy intelligence, and in early 1745 the English struck lucky again when the

20-gun *Elephant* and its 140 men were taken en route from Mississippi to Rochfort. As well as a primary cargo of indigo, hides, logwood and tobacco, 20,000 pieces of eight were secured plus the Superintendent of Mississippi and his wife and family.

An equally impressive prize was the *St. Joseph N.S. Granado*, sailing from Cartagena to Havana in May 1745, which was captured after three days by the *Kouli Kan* privateer and carried into Lisbon. The ship was found to contain eight chests of silver holding 24,551 dollars, one chest of gold, 50,436 further dollars, all registered, plus 17,250 dollars and three bars of golden contraband, all alongside a very large cargo of sugar, cocoa, snuff, hides and tobacco. The *St. Joseph* was described as the richest prize taken by a privateer since the war had started.

The *Postilion* of Alicante, a Spanish register ship from Vera Cruz to Cadiz, was seized in July 1745 with a large quantity of cochineal valued at 200,000 pieces of eight. A further rich Spanish ship was captured by a privateer of Rhode Island, "laden with many tons of copper plate, and a great quantity of valuable China, besides 30,000 dollars, and a case of wrought plate, of some 1000 ounces..." The reference to china is intriguing. Although Oriental ceramics were finding a receptive market in the West during the

1740s, only one French and one Spanish cargo of china were listed amongst all of the 6,917 ships within the current database of prizes, which is unlikely to be an accurate reflection of commercial reality. Why was this category of product so under-represented? The conspicuous presence of Chinese porcelain documented on the wrecked cargos of the *Compagnie Française des Indes's Prince de Conty* (1746), the 50-gun *Maidstone* English warship (1747) and the *Amsterdam* (1749) more accurately reflects the physical reality of the trade in Chinese porcelain in this period (de Maisonrouve, 1992: 22-24; L'Hour, 2005a; Marsden, 1972: 93).

The Spanish ship the *St. Zirioco* "suppos'd for Scotland, with 2500 muskets, and bayonets, 100 barrels of powder, 150 quintals of musket balls, some boxes of horseshoes and flints, and 7 chests of Spanish money, about 24,000 dollars in gold and silver, among the gold many pistoles folded singly in papers" taken by the *Tryal* privateer of Bristol in October 1745, is another revealing anomaly. Two months later another Spanish ship, the *St. Pedro* from St. Andero for Scotland, was intercepted by the *Ambuscade* privateer of Captain Cool containing 2,500 muskets, 100 chests of gunpowder, 70 chests of ball, and 1,219 pistols, which were carried into Crookhaven, Ireland. By aiming for Scotland Spain was replicating a strategy of the Spanish Armada of 1588, whereby the country's Catholic, anti-English sympathies were exploited. These seizures successfully helped doom the Second Jacobite Rebellion of 1745 aimed at putting Bonnie Prince Charlie on the throne of Britain (pers. comm. Lange Winkler, October 2010).

By far the richest prize taken during the entire war (other than Anson's capture of the *Cobadonga*, see Section 6 below) was commandeered in May 1746 by a Royal Navy warship, which joyfully found a million sterling in bullion in its hold. In July of the same year, cochineal, indigo, hides, snuff, gold, silver and the Governor of Guatemala in New Spain were captured by the *Dublin* privateer westward of the Azores on the 400-ton, 18-gun Spanish register ship the *N.S. de Begona* from Havana to Cadiz, which was brought into Dublin. The latest attested Spanish prize captured by the English in August 1748, notably several months after the signing of the Treaty of Aix-La-Chapelle on 18 April 1748 (Browning, 1994: 344), was the *Jesus Maria Joseph* from Vera Cruz for Havana and on to Europe with 161 chests of silver and two chests of gold taken by the *Bethell* frigate and carried into Fyall in the Western Islands.

C. French Prizes

French ships comprise the most abundant category of enemy prizes taken by the English during the War of the

Austrian Succession and by far the most numerous volume of recorded cargos. A total of 852 French consignments are cited in the *Gentleman's Quarterly*, over three times more numerous than for Spanish or English prizes, and consist of 69 different categories:

- Alcoholic Drinks: 104 (12.2%)
- Ballast: 5 (0.6%)
- Foodstuffs: 260 (30.5%)
- Metals: 5 (0.6%)
- Non-Alcoholic Drinks: 105 (12.3%)
- Non-Edible Dry Goods: 250 (29.3%)
- Very Rich Cargos: 71 (8.3%)
- War Shipments: 52 (6.1%)

At double the volume of any other commodity, the 163 cargos of sugar comprised 19.1% of all registered French shipments (Fig. 10). By relative value, for Britain sugar was the most important colonial import from the West Indies. Domestic English consumption was on the rise. Whereas 364 Bristol firms had imported 60,214 counterweight of sugar in 1681, 338 firms were importing 129,306 counterweight of sugar in 1742 (Price, 1996: 491). Across England consumption rates increased from about 4lbs per head in 1700-09 to reach 11lbs by 1770-79, compared to just over 2lbs per head used in France in the latter period (Price, 1998: 81-2).

The war interrupted the start of a rapid rise in sugar imports, which doubled in the London markets between 1740 and 1769. Different qualities of sugar existed, with a preference for the fine produce of St. Kitts and Barbados over the below average sugars of Jamaica and especially Antigua. As the House of Lascelles and Maxwell summarized in September 1756:

"The Jamaica Sugars, are in general very low and weak in quality, and not esteemed here nor abroad, which is chiefly owing to a want of care, and slovenliness in the making of them. The Planters in the Leward Islands are careful and industrious, and their Sugars are in request, and we can sell them as fast as they are landed. Indeed the Sugar Bakers seldom work Jamaica Sugars without mixing them in the pans with those of the Leward Islands."

The war naturally stalled the import of supplies and caused the price of sugar in England to rise in July 1744 from 34s. to 41s for Jamaican muscovados (Pares, 1996: 227, 232, 237). Captured French cargos were happily welcomed by Britain's sweet tooth.

Other highly represented French consignments included coffee (78), indigo (67), wine (58), war stores and soldier recruits (52, of which soldiers 15), cotton (37),

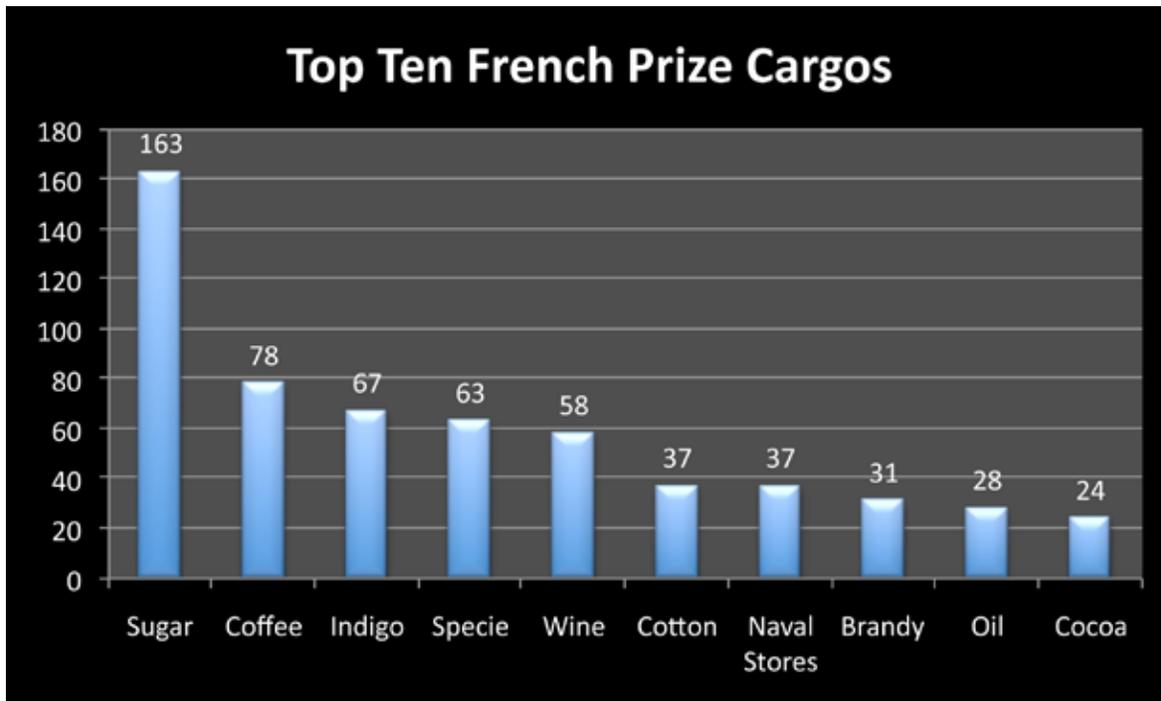


Fig. 10. The top ten most numerous French cargoes taken by the English during the War of the Austrian Succession, 1739-1748.

brandy (31), oil (28), hides/furs (25) and bale goods (19). Eight ships were generally described as very rich and 63 carried some form of specie (7.4%), higher than the 5.2% figure for English prizes but far lower than the 33% for Spanish ships. Not surprisingly given its extensive Colonial territories, some 420 of the French prize cargoes originated in the West Indies and Americas (49.3% of the total).

The French also seemingly dominated the trade with Africa. The prizes include 13 cargoes of slaves and seven of elephant tusks, compared to none for Spanish vessels and five slaves and one elephant tusk shipment amongst the English prizes. Nantes was the dominant French port in the triangular slave trade, and between *c.* 1700-92 92 ships operating in and out of this port were wrecked (Ducoin, 2005). Nevertheless, the war caused French imports from Africa to decline sharply from £3,775,000 in 1743 to just £31,000 in 1745 (Villiers, 1996: 260).

The high presence of indigo cargoes warrants comment. Again, this was a much-needed bonanza for Britain, where the production of woolen goods outstripped all other industrial activities, just as linen did in Scotland and Ireland. The need for a constant flow of dyestuffs was essential to the domestic economy. In the period covered by the War of the Austrian Succession, Britain experienced a crisis in

supply after the West Indies abandoned the cultivation of dye products in favor of the far more lucrative sugar. Imports from the Americas declined accordingly from 48% in 1722-24 to 25% in 1752-54 with the result that British dye-salters had to secure supplies from France, whose West Indian colonies had continued production (Price 1998: 82).

The following newspaper entries provide a balanced reflection of the typical character and scale of the French prizes, and of France's particular specialty of concealing specie. On 18 April 1744 a French ship of 200 tons sailing from Havana to Old Spain with a valuable cargo of 25,000 pieces of eight, found concealed in bags of snuff, was taken by a Charlestown privateer. *La Victoire* of 36 guns and 145 men was captured in March 1746 with 100 chests of silver en route from Cape François to Port Louis. The cosmopolitan, multiple inward and outward bound consignments dispatched in single ships between France and its American colonies is represented by the *Jean Baptist*, Marseilles to Cape François, which was taken into Philadelphia by the Marlborough privateer in June 1746 and was found to contain 250 hogsheads of wine, 400 casks of oil, 250 boxes of soap and 200 boxes of candles, alongside cordials, gold lace and clothing. By May 1747 the *Gentleman's Quarterly* announced that officials had computed that the English held 11,000 French sailors as prisoners.

D. Other Prizes

English ships also captured a further 255 cargos comprising 42 different categories of commodity from six other nations. Several consignments are registered as deriving from smuggler ships, and the provenance of a large quantity is simply listed as unknown: Danish 4 (1.6%), Dutch 45 (17.6%), German 7 (2.7%), Italian 11 (4.3%), Prussian 2 (0.8%), smugglers 16 (6.3%), Swedish 15 (5.9%) and unknown 155 (60.8%). These can be subdivided into the following general categories:

- Alcoholic Drinks: 40 (15.7%)
- Ballast: 3 (1.2%)
- Foodstuffs: 45 (17.6%)
- Metals: 12 (4.7%)
- Non-Alcoholic Drinks: 23 (9.0%)
- Non-Edible Dry Goods: 51 (20.0%)
- Very Rich Cargos: 52 (20.4%)
- War Shipments: 29 (11.4%)

Of these prize cargos, 59 originated in the West Indies and Americas (23.1% of the total other consignments). Sugar is especially well represented (19), as well as cocoa (13) and indigo (11). Examples of non-French and non-Spanish foreign cargos captured by the English include 27 chests of silver, each containing 4,000 pieces of eight, taken out of a Genoese ship valued at 20,000*l.* in 1741 and 200,000 pieces of eight belonging to the Spanish captured off the Western Isles from the Swedish ship the *Samuel Lynn* in October 1743.

The English simultaneously kept a close eye on local craft breaking the embargo on the import of the goods of enemy states. So in June 1745 a smuggling cutter of Hastings was taken into Dover by the *Eagle* privateer after being caught en route to Bologne with money to buy a French cargo. Another smuggling cutter of 40 tons and armed with 14 swivel guns was seized by a custom-house sloop on the coast of Sussex in August 1745 laden with three tons of tea, 400 half anchors of brandy and some mountain wine and claret. In September 1745 a vessel was listed as "A smuggling boat, with a cargo of tea and brandy, and the cargo of another boat, making together 800 lb. of tea, and 300 half anchors of brandy."

5. Royal Navy 'Privateering'

The role of Royal Navy officers and warships in the war of privateering is often overlooked despite the reality that in the War of the Austrian Succession ships of the line aggressively sought out prizes, largely to protect the English trade but equally to line the pockets of a commander and crew.

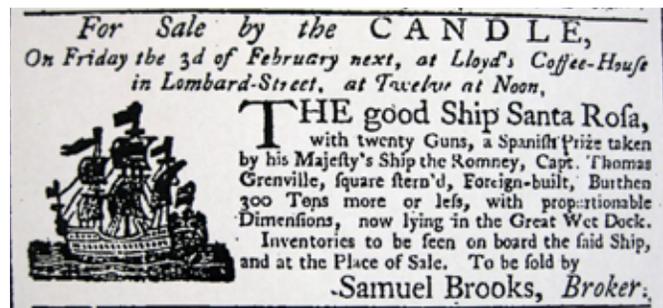


Fig. 11. An advert for the sale on 3 February 1744 at the Lloyd's Coffee-House, London, of the 300-ton Santa Rosa Spanish prize taken by the Romney English warship (Daily Advertiser, 25 January 1744).



Fig. 12. An advert for the sale on 9 May 1744 at the Lloyd's Coffee-House, London, of 929 lead ingots taken with the St. Ann and Rite prize by the Wolf and Fly English warships (Daily Advertiser, 9 May 1744).



Fig. 13. An advert for the sale on 11 May 1744 at the Lloyd's Coffee-House, London, of the Spanish 27-gun galley prize the Nuestra Senora d'Esclavitud, "built for Sailing, in which she has been seldom outdone", and taken by the Fox man-of-war (Daily Advertiser, 9 May 1744).

For Sale by the C A N D L E,
Tomorrow, being the 29th instant, at Lloyd's Coffee-House in
Lombard-Street, at Twelve at Noon,



THE St. Francis, a French Prize, taken by his Majesty's Ships the Hampton-Court, Chester, and Grampus Sloop, Burthen 180 Tons more or less, now lying at the upper Wet Dock.
 Inventories to be seen on board, and at the Place of Sale. To be sold by
Jonathan Popham, Broker,
In Abchurch-Lane.

For Sale by the C A N D L E,
On Thursday next, the 30th instant, at Lloyd's Coffee-House in
Lombard-Street, at Twelve at Noon,



THE Jason, a French Prize, taken by his Majesty's Ships the Hampton-Court, Chester, and Grampus Sloop, Burthen 250 Tons more or less, now lying at the Red-House, near Deptford.
 Inventories to be seen on board, and at the Place of Sale. To be sold by
Jonathan Popham, Broker.

For Sale by the C A N D L E,
On Thursday next, the 30th instant, at Lloyd's Coffee-House in
Lombard-Street, at Twelve at Noon, immediately after
the Jason,



THE Three Sisters, a French Prize, taken by his Majesty's Ship the Hampton-Court, Chester, and Grampus Sloop. Burthen 180 Tons more or less, now lying at the Red-House, near Deptford.
 Inventories to be seen on board, and at the Place of Sale. To be sold by
Jonathan Popham, Broker.

For Sale by the C A N D L E,
At Garraway's Coffee-House in Exchange-Alley, on Wednesday
the 5th of September next, at Four o'Clock in the Afternoon,

THE Cargoes of the Le Mars and La Vestal, two of the French Prizes taken by his Majesty's Ships Hampton-Court, Chester, and Grampus Sloop, Savage Mostyn, Francis Geary, and Richard Collins, Esqs. Commanders, consisting of the following Goods, viz,

801 Hopheads of Sugar.
 Catalogues will be timely dispers'd by
Jonathan Popham, Broker.

Fig. 14. A row of adverts for the sale at Lloyd's and Garraway's Coffee-Houses of the prize ships St. Francis, Jason, Three Sisters, Le Mars and La Vestal, plus some related cargo, in late August and early October 1744. These ships were taken by the Hampton Court and Chester men-of-war and the Grampus sloop, which had been part of Admiral Balchin's fleet (Daily Advertiser, 28 August 1744).

In fact, between 1739 and 1748 statistics obtained from the *Gentleman's Quarterly* prize lists reveals that no less than 1,337 Spanish and French ships were taken by Royal Navy ships, which equates to an impressive 40.3% of all prizes captured by the English. The navy's role in the strategy of *guerre de course* was substantial.

With their irrefutable firepower, numerous key prizes were seized (Figs. 11-14, 16). Between 1739 and 1741, for instance, Captain Warren of the *Squirrel* got his hands on a French ship with 1,387 pistols, 290*l.* in silver, 200 ounces of plate and 700 barrels of flour, cocoa, gold and silver lace for Cartagena. In the same period Captain Thompson of the *Success* captured a cargo of cochineal, hides, 170,000 dollars and 60 bars of gold and silver. Rummaging through paperwork also aided intelligence. On 8 May 1744 communications on a Spanish tender taken by HMS *Montague* revealed that Admiral Torres was making his way to Europe with his squadron and 16 million pieces of eight.

Following the daring capture of the *Nuestra Senora de Cobadonga* by Commander Anson, it was yet another Royal Navy warship that took what was alleged to be the second richest cargo of the war in early 1745:

“The *Conception*, a French ship of 400 tons, 20 guns, and 326 men, from Carthagena for the Havana, having on board 800 serons of Cocoa, in each of which was deposited a bar of gold, 68 chests of silver coin, containing 310,000 pieces of eight, wrought plate of equivalent value, a compleat set of church plate, a large quantity of gold buckles and snuff-boxes, a curious two-wheel'd chase of silver... a large quantity of pearls, diamonds, and other precious stone, above 600 *l.* weight of gold, &c. which made it the richest ships taken since the war, except the *Acapulco* ship taken by admiral Anson. This valuable prize was taken by the *Rose* man of war of 20 guns, capt. Frankland, after a very smart engagement of 11 glasses, in which the *Conception* had 110 men killed, and the *Rose* five, and carried into Charles Town, South Carolina.”

The 22-gun *Notre Dame de Deliverance* from the South Seas was captured by HMS *Sutherland* and *Chester* in September 1745 and carried into Louisbourg with “in gold and silver above 300,000*l.* and a cargo of Peruvian wool, cocoa, and jesuits bark”. His Majesty's fleet of the *Kent*, *Advice*, *Lion*, *Oxford*, *Eagle*, *Hector*, *Dolphin* and *Hampton Court* enjoyed vast success in July 1747, when 48 French ships were taken homeward-bound from St. Domingo carrying 48 consignments of sugar, 30 of indigo, four of cotton, seven of hides, 24 of coffee, one cochineal and one leather.

The capture of rich prizes often involved serious loss of life, not least the taking of the 70-gun Spanish man of war *Glorioso* in November 1747, which had just arrived at Ferrol from Havana. An initial chase with the *Dartmouth*

For Sale by the CANDLE,
At the New Inn in Dartmouth, on Wednesday the 7th of November next, at Ten o'Clock in the Morning,
THE good Ship the Deux Amis, a French Prize, not two Years old, taken by the Boskawen Privateer, Burthen 360 Tons more or less, a prime Sailor, with twenty-one Carriage-Guns, proportionable Dimensions, and well found, now lying at Dartmouth.
At the same Time will be sold the following Prize Goods.
208 Hides in the Hair, in four Lots, laded out of the Deux Amis Prize, from the Havanna;
880 Bushels of French Salt;
16 Pieces, containing 1530 Gallons of French Brandy, landed out of the Fortune from Nantes, taken by the Young Cerus Privateer.
The Brandy to be put up one Cask in a Lot.
The said Goods to be seen at Dartmouth till the Time of Sale. Inventories of the Ship to be had at the Place of Sale, at Lloyd's Coffee-House in Lombard-Street, and of
Charles Rogers, Broker.

Fig. 15. An advert for the sale at the New Inn, Dartmouth, of the French armed merchant vessel *Deux Amis* and several prize cargos on 7 November 1744 (Daily Advertiser, 31 October 1744).

For SALE by the CANDLE,
At the FOUNTAIN TAVERN in Portsmouth, On Monday the 29th of August, at Nine o'Clock in the Morning;
THE following Goods taken by a Squadron of his Majesty's Ships, commanded by Lord Anson and Sir Peter Warren, viz.
295 Hogsheds, 3 Butts, 11 Chests French Red Wine
17 Hogsheds, 1 Butt Ditto White ditto
90 Butts Spanish White ditto
200 Quarter Quarter Casks, 8 Butts Brandy
199 Chests, 10 Casks Olive Oil
41 Hogsh. White Wine Vinegar
180 Barrels Flour
414 Barrels, 62 Tierces Pork
334 Barrels, 59 Tierces Beef
8 Pieces White Silk
1 Piece Black Velvet
17 Pieces Scarlet Camblet
1908 Pair Linnen Spatterdishes
426 Linnen Frocks
366 Canvas Trowsers
630 Reams Paper
152 Pier and Chamber Looking Glafs
586 Laced Hats
3000 Cartouch Boxes
1000 Buff Slings
430 Buff Belts
568 Muskets
144 Pistols
500 Powder Horns
239 Serviceable Iron Cannon from 6 to 42 Pounders, 2 Unserviceable
A large Quantity of Iron Shot suitable to the Cannon
102 Barrels and Cags of Bullets, and small Shot
34 Copper Pans for Sugar Boilers
50 Iron Plates for Hatters
797 Iron Pots of all Sizes
65 Casks of Nails
19 Hogsheds, 45 Barr. Rosin
12 Hogsheds, 23 Barr. Pitch
46 Barrels, 11 Hogsh. Tar
With Carpenters, Joyners, and Smiths Tools, Stock Locks, Padlocks, Tin-plates, Hungary and Compound Waters, Drugs and Medicines, Beans, Peas, Calavancies, Rice, Gunners Stores of all Sorts and sundry other Goods.
Catalogues will be Timely delivered at the Place of Sale; and by
WILLIAM and BENJAMIN VAUGHAN, } *Brokers.*
JONATHAN POPHAM, }

Fig. 16. An advert for the sale of several cargos at the Fountain Tavern, Portsmouth, on 29 August 1748, taken by English warships commanded by Lord Anson and Sir Peter Warren (General Advertiser, 3 August 1748).

ended up with the Royal Navy warship blowing up and all its crew but one being lost. The *Russel* man of war subsequently prevailed and got its hands on the reward of £1.3 million in specie being transported by the Spanish warship. Towards the end of the war in March 1748 one of the last enemy prizes to be captured was the *Union*, a Spanish register ship of 30 guns sailing from Havana to Cadiz with 360,000 dollars, cocoa, cochineal, snuff and hides that was taken by HMS *Bristol*.

6. The Voyage of the *Centurion*

Inspired by Admiral Vernon's early naval success in the war of taking the Spanish-held town of Porto Bello, Panama, in November 1739 (Rodger, 2004: 236), the Admiralty continued to consider grand acts of shock and awe (Fig. 1). Nowhere was the strategic central role of the Royal Navy in the privateering war more brazen than in the round the world voyage of the *Centurion* between 1740 and 1744, which was an almost suicidal example of a highly ambitious attempt to drive a stake straight through the heart of Spain's commercial empire. Overtly dangerous and of dubious impact beyond raising national morale, the venture would be the last act of naval privateering sanctioned by any English government.

The scheme was formalized on 18 October 1739, and in the words of Sir John Norris (Heaps, 1973: 23):

"This morning I and Mr Kemp were at Sir Charles Wager's with his secretary Mr Gashry and Mr Naish, who opened up to us his sentiments of meeting the Spanish ships from Acapulco at the port of Manila, where they always come to, and likewise are built there and make their outset from thence. And that if a proper strength could be fitted to sail from hence by Christmas we might reach the place before they would arrive with their usual money which is two million sterling or thereabouts. That the Spaniards in the fort and port of Manila were about 150 soldiers; that about 300 soldiers above the ship's complement that should be sent might take the said place, and by removing the Spanish government and garrison, and a good useage to the natives, the place would be easily kept. That by its situation the most beneficial trade can be carried on to China, and if His Majesty should after possession give it to the East India Company an allowable consideration might arise from it."

Commodore George Anson was well experienced for the job of commander of the mission, having served in the Royal Navy since the age of 15 (Fig. 2). He had served under Sir John Norris in the Baltic and North Sea and in 1724 was put in command of a frigate protecting commerce off North America (Anson, 1905). The commodore was appointed to the 60-gun warship *Centurion* in 1737.

The ship had been built in 1732 for a crew of 400 men, was short and beamy, with cannon on two decks.

The squadron of five men-of-war, one sloop and two store ships set out on 18 September 1740. En route several prizes were seized following an extremely painful voyage where the crews had to deal with unsuitably old sailors, scurvy, bad weather and pursuit by the Spanish fleet of Pizarro. On 8 September 1741 the *Centurion* captured the *Nuestra Senora de Monte Carmelo*, a rich merchant vessel of 450 tons carrying a large cargo of sugar, cloth and £1,800 in dollars and plate. A month after spotting mainland Chile on 30 September 1741, the *Centurion* captured a second prize, the *Santa Teresa de Jesus*, bound from Guayaquil to Callao with a valuable cargo and £170 of silver. The *Tryal* went on to take the 260-ton *Nuestra Senora del Carmine* on 11 November and its cargo of steel, iron, wax, pepper, cedar and bale goods bound for Callao from Paita and worth 400,000 dollars (Pack, 1960: 49-58).

Anson produced a complete account of his ultimate success whilst still on board the *Centurion* after returning safely to St. Helen's on 14 June 1744, which summarized the taking of General Don Jeronimo de Mentero's *Nuestra Senora de Cobadonga* of 550 men, 36 mounted guns and 28 four-pounders (*Daily Advertiser*, No. 4187; Fig. 3):

"The South-West Monsoon being set in on the Coast of China before I had refitted his majesty's Ship, made it impossible for me to proceed to Europe till the Month of October. I therefore determined, although I had not half my Complement of Men, to Cruize for the King of Spain's Galleon, which was expected from Acapulco with Treasure to Manila. After having finished the necessary Repairs of my Ship, on the 18th of April, I made the best of my Way for Cape Spiritu Santo, being the Land to the Southward of the Streights of Manila... having cruized thirty-one Days, on the 20th of June I got Sight of her, and gave Chace, she bearing down upon me before the Wind, when she came within two Miles she brought to, to fight me, and after an Engagement of an Hour and half, within less than Pistol-Shot, the Admiral struck his Flag at the Main-Topmast-Head: She was called the *Nuestra Senora del Caba Donga*, Don Geronimo Montero, Admiral, had 42 Guns; 17 of which were Brass, and 28 Brass Pedereroes, 550 Men, 58 of which were slain, and 83 wounded; her Masts and Rigging were shot to pieces, and 150 Shot passed through her Hull, many of which were between Wind and Water, which occasioned her to be very leaky."

Anson's return to London caused a sensation. The enormous treasure captured was paraded in a Roman triumphal style parade of 32 wagons through St. James's, the Strand and Cheapside before being deposited in the Tower of London (Fig. 4). When finally counted, the plunder consisted of "2,600,000 Pieces of Eight, 150,000 Ounces

of Plate, 10 Bars of Gold, and a large Quantity of Gold and Silver Dust; in the whole to the Amount of 1,250,000*l.* Sterling” (*Gentleman’s Magazine*, June 1744). This monetary windfall compared extremely favorably against the entire budget of the navy, which amounted to £2,813,586 in 1745 (Heaps, 1973: 254). No greater prize has ever been captured before or since (Fig. 5).

7. Balchin’s *Victory* & Royal Navy Prizes in 1744

The seek and capture mission of the *Centurion* was an extreme example of long-distance Royal Navy privateering. Far less predatory and typical of the times were warships undergoing cruises with multiple objectives. Disrupting foreign trade was typically combined with the captain and crews’ own personal financial ambitions. The year 1744 was no different to the rest of the war and in fact witnessed the zenith of enemy prizes taken: 550 French and Spanish ships compared to 539 in 1747, the next highest year. By contrast 431 English ships were seized, the third highest annual figure for the duration of the war.

The newspapers especially relished the tales of Royal Navy warships bloodying the enemy’s nose. In 1744, for instance, the *Daily Post* of 22 May reported that “The *Roebuck* took Spanish ship, the *St. Jago*, of 400 tons laden with Ammunition, Stores &c. besides 30,000 Pieces of Eight, and carry’d her into Lisbon.” Meanwhile, Captain Mitchell of the *Worcester* man of war took four French Ships of great value bound from the Canaries to St. Omers, and carried them into Gibraltar. Soon after, the *Newcastle* seized a French ship sailing from Alexandria to Marseilles “being richly laden, she having on board upwards of 90,000 Dollars in Specie” alongside a cargo worth 20,000*l.* (*Daily Advertiser*, 11 June 1744).

The following month “According to private Letters from Cadiz, they had Intelligence there, that a Register-Ship which sailed from thence in April last for America, has been taken by an English Man of War. It is said, that 200,000 Pieces of Eight have been insured on this Ship at Genoa” (*Daily Advertiser*, 13 July 1744). August was equally busy, when the Court of Admiralty announced that two Spanish prizes had been captured by the *Princessa* and *Deptford* in the Bay of Biscay (*Daily Post*, 9 August 1744). A week later the *Deptford* and *Humphries* cruising off Barcelona captured a further three Spanish prizes worth £50,000 (*Daily Post*, 13 August 1744). At the same time a French ship transporting 7,000 barrels of white sugar and 1,600 bags of coffee was seized by an English man-of-war and carried into Leghorn (*Daily Advertiser*, 16 August 1744).

The cruise of Admiral Sir John Balchin’s First Rate warship *Victory* towards Lisbon and on to Gibraltar yielded equal success. As part of its core role as the flagship of the Channel fleet, the *Victory* had been charged with protecting British trade from early on in the war. Thus, on 25 June 1741 Admiral Norris was in command of this flagship and a large fleet, and set out from *Spithead* because, as the *Gentleman’s Quarterly* confirmed, “twas hoped to root out the Privateers of St. Sebastians, and deliver our Ships, of which they took too many this Month...”

Captain Thomas Trevor’s log of the *Duke* (ADM 51/282), under the command of Admiral Stewart, Vice Admiral of the Red, described the beginning of a privateering attack within Balchin’s fleet on Friday 12 August 1744 at the start of the *Victory*’s final voyage, after Admiral Sir John Balchin had assumed command that summer:

“At 7pm saw 25 sails. At 5am on Sunday 12... the *Hampton Court*, *Augusta* and *Fly* sloop [in *Victory*’s fleet] gave chase. At 2pm still carrying on the chase under hard squalls and rain showers. On Monday 13 August the chase proved to be two English privateers and six French merchant ships. The *Captain* took possession of the *Intrepid*, the *Augusta* of the *Flower*, and the *Hampton Court* of the *Bon Enfant* and St Lawrence. The Dutch took the *Moderate* and *Le Searne*.”

Captain Roger Martin’s log of the *St. George* (ADM 51/854) confirmed that “the other two were Engs privateers, who had been chasing the 6 sail of French, which had occasioned them to bear down to us...”, the interesting inference being that the privateers and Royal Navy fleet were perhaps preying on the same ships. This is again indicated by the *Gentleman’s Magazine* of August 1744, which described the skirmish as consisting of “Two Martinico Ships out of Six for France, 4 of which engaged with the Prince Charles Privateer, Capt. Gwynn, for above 4 Hours, to whom, after his losing 6 Men and 18 wounded, they struck; but next Day all of them were taken by Sir John Balchen’s Fleet in Lat. 46.40.”

The master’s log of the *Duke* (ADM 52/576) provides further detail of the chase and the nature of the vessels seized (Fig. 17):

“St: John Balchen hoisted his flagg... at ½ past 5 d^o: came up wth: the Chase which prov’d to be 2 English Privateers and 6 s^o: of French Marcht: ships – from Cape Francis Laden wth: Sugar, Coffee, and Indigo, where taken by y^e fleet Viz -
Le Intrepide -. by y^e Captain
Le Flore Augusta
La Laurence .. Hampton Court
Le Bons Enfant . Ditto

Le Monarch Dutch
 Le Siren Dutch”

The captain’s log of the *Augusta* (ADM 52/537) confirmed that the master of the “Flora” was Reymard Challiblier, whose 250-ton, 24-gun ship was bound from Cape François to Nantes with a crew of 40 men and a cargo of sugar and indigo. The master’s log of the *Duke* related that the four prizes were accompanied to shore by the *Hampton Court*, which departed from the fleet on Saturday 18 August. The skirmish took place around 40 leagues west of Land’s End, but seems to have continued after this initial capture. The *Daily Advertiser* of 23 August 1744 (No. 4316) thus informed its eager readers that:

“Letters from on board the *Sunderland*, Man of, belonging to Sir John Balchen’s Squadron, dated the 18th instant, in the Latitude 45.56, mention, that they had taken six Ships from Martinico, and were in Pursuit of four more, which they were in Hopes of coming up with; and that Ship which the *Sunderland* boarded had a great Quantity of Money on board...”

While the *Hampton Court* sailed home, both Balchin’s fleet and other British squadrons continued to round on

the enemy trade. The *Baltimore* carried into Lisbon a rich ship from Bordeaux with 14 guns and 90 men, and “There was found in one of the Hogheads of Sugar taken out of the Martinico Ship taken by the Dartmouth-Galley, about 7000 Dollars, which had been conceal’d” (*Daily Advertiser*, 25 August 1744). Meanwhile, from Balchin’s original fleet “The Princess Amelia, Capt. Jandine, took a French Felucca of Malta, bound for the Streights from the Levant, who took out 1,000 l. in Specie; and the Ship, ransomed for 70,000 Livres, is since taken by the Oxford Man of War” (*London Evening-Post*, 28-30 August 1744). The additional prizes that the *Hampton Court* claimed, as listed on 28 August (ADM 106/993/115), were the *Jason*, *Duc Penthuise*, *Le Mars*, *Le Solide*, *St. Francois*, *Le Vestal*, *Trois Soirs* and *Jenette* (Fig. 14). The circumstances under which this English man-of-war took these vessels – on the way back to England after leaving Balchin’s fleet or in a second rapid cruise thereafter – remains unclarified.

Back home, the question of prize possession was heating up. The *Hampton Court* had reached port, seemingly with the additional prizes it captured after departing Balchin’s fleet, and the Dutch Commodore Baccherst had quickly traveled to town “from the Dutch Squadron now with Sir John Balchen’s Fleet, in Order to settle some Disputes

HKE	Courses	Winds	Remarks
Monday 13 th August 1744			
1	4 4	NNE	NW
2	4 6	NNE	NW
3	6 2	NNE	NW
4	6 3	NNE	NW
5	5 1	NNE	NW
6	2 brought too up NNE off NNE		
7			
8	1 3	NNE	NW
9	3		
10	2 2		
11	1 5		
12	1 4		
1	1		
2	2 3	NNE	NW
3	2 2		
4	3 3	NNE	NW

Mod⁺ and cloudy sett studdings.
 S: John Balchen hoisted his flagg d: hoisted ours
 as did all y^e flagg ships at 1/2 past 3 d: hauls
 down our flagg at 4 d: carried a way y^e Main -
 Topm: studdings. Boom at 1/2 past 5 d: came up
 with the Chase which proved to be 2 English
 Privateers & Six: of French March: ships -
 from Cape Francois Laden wth Sugar, Coffy
 and Indigo, where taken by y^e fleet viz ~
 Le Intrepide - by y^e Captain
 La Flore - Augusta
 La Laurence - Hampton Court
 Le Bons Enfant - Ditto
 Le Monrach - Dutch
 La Siren - Dutch

Fig. 17. Entry in the master’s log of the *Duke* (ADM 52/576) for the chase of the French prizes caught by Admiral Balchin’s fleet on 10 August 1744.

between some of our Men of War, two Dutch Ships, and one of our Privateers, about the taking the two Martinico Ships, which struck to all the aforesaid Ships one after another” (*Daily Advertiser*, 31 August 1744). The implication is that the allies were concerned about being short-changed of potential prize money.

Following admiralty law, the hatches of these prizes would have been sealed until British customs officers could formally assess their contents. The wait was well worthwhile because “In rummaging the Tessier, a Martinico Ship, taken by the Hampton Court and the Chester Men of War, there have been found conceal’d in the Ballast 28,000 Dollars and two Casks of Gold, reckon’d 25,000 l.” (*Penny London Post*, 31 August - 3 September 1744). More joy followed: “We hear there were found on board one of the St. Domingo Ships, that struck to the Dutch Men of War along with Admiral Balchen, above 60,000 Pieces of Eight” (*London Evening-Post*, 4-6 September 1744). Towards the end of September “On examining the Le Lux del Francis, a French Prize, taken by his Majesty’s Ships the Dreadnought and Hampton Court [both of Balchin’s fleet], there was found conceal’d in the Ballast five Bags off Dollars, valued at 12000l.” (*Penny London Post*, 17-19 September 1744).

Back at sea the blitz on trade continued unabated. From Balchin’s fleet the *Jersey* man-of-war took into Gibraltar two Spanish ships bound from Bordeaux to Toulon (*Daily Post*, 3 September 1744). Coincidentally, a merchant vessel also called the *Victory* “of 450 Tons, from Martinico for Marseilles, laden with white Sugar, Coffee, Cacao, &c. was taken the 17th of July, by his Majesty’s Ship the Guernsey, and sent into Leghorn. This Prize is thought to be worth 40000 l. Sterling” (*Daily Advertiser*, 13 September 1744).

Although these few weeks give the impression of British successes, these were tempered by proportionate ship seizures by the Spanish and French. Around 31 August 1744 reports from Cartagena filtered home of nine Dutch ships “laden with Ammunition for the English Fleet” taken in the Straits of Gibraltar, including a “large Sum of Money [that] was found on board these Ships hid in the Powder Barrels, which ‘tis said, was design’d for the Court of Turin” (*Daily Advertiser*, 15 September 1744). On the very day that the *Victory* was lost in a storm on 5 October, dispatches from Paris confirmed that the Brest squadron had taken two English warships and 14 transports laden with provisions and ammunition for the Mediterranean fleet (*Daily Advertiser*, 8 October 1744).

Admiral Balchin’s fleet would have clearly benefited financially from the prizes captured early in his cruise to Lisbon. The extent to which Sir John was personally concerned with monetary windfalls remains a matter of debate.

If the *Penny London Post* of 12 November 1744 was faithful to reality, then the battle-hardened admiral had his eye on just one goal at Gibraltar after safely escorting the liberated victualing convoy into the Mediterranean towards Admiral Matthews – defeating the enemy:

“The late brave and worthy Sir John Balchen, a little before he left the Mediterranean, was told by an Officer as a Piece of good News, that M. Torres was expected on that Coast; to which the gallant old Man answer’d, very briskly, *Believe me To-, I had rather fight Six French Men of War than carry Six of the richest Galleons to Britain.*”

These were brave words: Torres’ squadron was convoying 16 million pieces of eight. Nevertheless, these are the last recorded words of Sir John Balchin, Admiral of HMS *Victory*, before his flagship sank in the western English Channel on 5 October 1744.

8. The Life of *La Marquise de Tourny*

The absence of any documentation for *La Marquise de Tourny*, whose wreck Odyssey Marine Exploration discovered at Site 33c (Cunningham-Dobson, 2010), within records at the Public Records Office or in any captured prize lists in the UK, including the detailed entries in the *Gentleman’s Quarterly*, strongly suggests that the ship escaped British privateers and warships during the course of its life. By contrast, both its sister and brother corsairs, *Le Marquis de Tourny* and *Le Grand Marquis de Tourny*, were captured: the former in 1744 and 1748 and the latter in 1757.² The documentation for these ships provides the most opportune means of reconstructing the routine of *La Marquise de Tourny* in her capacity as an armed private merchant vessel.

Like *Le Marquis de Tourny* it is highly probable that the sister ship ventured to the Americas to supply the French colonies of Quebec and further afield to the West Indies (Fig. 20). *Le Marquis de Tourny* was captured by the *London* privateer and taken into Portsmouth on 23 April 1748, where it was boarded by customs officers. The processing of the cargo evidently took some considerable time because the cargo was only advertized by ‘sale by the candle’ in the *General Advertiser* on 3 August 1748 and was listed in the following order as consisting of (Fig. 18):

- Brandies, bales of linen, cottons, rattines, blankets, canvas and vitry
- Men and women’s shoes

For *S A L E* by the *C A N D L E*,
 At the *Royal Exchange Coffee-house* in *Threadneedle-Street*,
Sometime the latter End of August,
THE *Cargoe* of the *Marquis de Tourny*,
 taken by the *London Privateer*, *J. V. ...* Commander, as
 it now lies at *Guernsey*, and there to be delivered, consisting of various
 Goods, suited for the *Guinea*, *West-India*, and *New-England*
Trade, as
 Brandies, Bales of Linnen, Cottons, Rattines, Blankets, Canvas, Vitry,
 Men and Womens Shoes Candles, Salt
 Silk and mill'd Hosiery Pitch, Tar, Rosin, and Oyl
 Silke Handkerchiefs and Pieces of About 600 Frauds and Copper-
 Cambrick, Gold and Silver Kettles and Stewpans
 Lace 264 Forrest or Fowling-Pieces
 Ribbons, Shirts, Hats With a Set of new Sails, Cables
 Playing Cards, Nails and Cordage, intended for a 40
 Earthen and Glass Ware Gun Man of War building at
 180 Barrels Gunpowder Canada
 Cases of Glass And sundry other Goods.
 Particulars of which will be published, and Catalogues delivered in
 due Time, at *Mr. Peter Dobree's*, Merchant in *Guernsey* (under
 whose Care the *Cargoe* is) at the Place of Sale, and by
D H. S. AUGIER, Broker.
 Whalebone-Court, where Samples may be seen.

Fig. 18. An extensive advert for the sale of the cargo of the Marquis de Tourny at the Royal Exchange Coffee-House in Threadneedle-street, London, at the end of August 1748 (General Advertiser, 3 August 1748).

For *S A L E* by the *C A N D L E*,
 At the *Bath Coffee-house* in *Liverpool*, on *Tuesday* the *20th Instant*, at
Eleven o'Clock in the *Forenoon*, the following Goods, being the entire
Cargo of the *Grand Marquis de Tournay*, a *French Prize* from
St. Domingo, taken by the *Liverpool Privateer*, *Capt. William Hut-*
chinson Commander, viz.
FOUR Hundred and ninety-four Hogheads,
 13 Tierces, 4 Barrels, Sugar; 19 Butts, 35 Hhds. 30 Tierces,
 23 Barrels, Coffee; 2 Butts, 7 Hhds. 24 Tierces, 31 Barrels, 4 An-
 chers, Indigo; 22 whole Hides tann'd; 117 half ditto; 8 1 half
 Tons Logwood.
 Samples of the aforefaid Goods to be seen to the Time of Sale, at the
 following Places, viz.
 In *Liverpool* at *Mr. Hardware's*, Merchant; in *London*, at *No. 2,*
Dyers-Hall, Thames-street; and at the Place of Sale, the three pre-
 ceding Days; where Catalogues may be had, and of
MARK HUDSON, Sworn Broker,
Laurence Pountney Lane, Cannon-street.

Fig. 19. An advert for the sale of the cargo of the Grand Marquis de Tournay at the Bath Coffee-House, Liverpool, on Tuesday 20 September 1757 (Public Advertiser, 9 September 1757).



Fig. 20. An export permit for the safe passage of the Marquis de Tourny to sail from Bordeaux to Quebec, dated 26 January 1748 (PRO HCA 32/129).

- Silk and mill'd hose
- Silk handkerchiefs and pieces of cambrick, gold and silver lace
- Ribbons, shorts and hats
- Playing cards and nails
- Earthen and glass ware
- 180 barrels gunpowder
- Cases of glass
- Candles and salt
- Pitch, tar, rozin and copper kettles and stewpans
- 264 Forrest or fowling pieces
- A set of new sails, cables and cordage intended for a 40-gun man-of-war being built in Canada
- Sundry other goods

For unspecified reasons, *Le Marquis de Tourny* had been escorted to Guernsey. By coincidence, the cargo was put under the care of Mr. Peter Dobree, a local merchant and most likely a relative of Nicholas Dobree, who had informed the Admiralty of the discovery of wreckage from Balchin's *Victory* on the Channel Isles in October 1744 and who was the man who accused the Alderney light-house keeper of luring the ship to its fate by failing to keep the lights burning. The auction advertisement states that cargo was to be shipped back to London for sale at the end of August at the Royal Exchange Coffee-house in Threadneedle Street.

The translated letter of marque seized with *Le Marquis de Tourny* leaves no doubt that despite its extensive commercial and State consignments, it was simultaneously a functioning privateer. The document's translation as part of condemning the ship as a prize in 1748 records that:

“Louis-Jean-Marie de Bourbon, Duke of Penthièvre, Governor and Lieutenant-General for the King in his Province of Brittany, Admiral of France, to all to whom these presents shall come, Greeting. We make known, that we have given leave to M. Lawrence Domé master and Capⁿ of the ship named *Le Marquis de Tourny* of Bordeaux of the burthen of four hundred sixty tons or thereabouts, mounting twenty guns and no swivels, was lying in the harbour of Bordeaux to cause the said ship to be fitted out for war and trade to arm and provide her with all things necessary to load her with such goods as he shall think proper provided they are not prohibited or forbidden, to go and trade at Quebeck and other French colonies, and in so doing to make war upon the enemies of the State, upon all Rovers, Pirates, Robbers, lawless people and others who would hinder the Liberty of the Commerce of the King's subjects; he may also cruise upon the vessels, barks, and other shipping, as well French as foreign carrying on a foreign and prohibited trade to the French islands in America, to conquer them by force of arms, to take and carry them to the island, the nearest to the place

where he shall have taken then prize, having first given the same bond as if he was fitted out for warr... we have signed these presents and have there unto caused the seal of our arms to be countersigned by the Secretary General of the Marine at Bordeaux cause the 26th of January 1748.

Delivered at Bordeaux the 26th of January 1748 – Registered in the Registry of the Admiralty of Bordeaux the 26th of January 1748.

L.J.M. de Bourbon
By his most serene Highness Romieu [?]

If the fate of *Le Marquis de Tourny* furnishes a partial mirror image of the kind of cargos *La Marquise de Tourny* would have transported during its lifetime out of Bordeaux, the capture of *Le Grand Marquis de Tourny* in 1757 inbound from St. Domingo offers insights into the kinds of commodities possibly shipped homeward. The cargo of the 1757 ship, captured by the *Liverpool* privateer, was advertized for sale in the *Public Advertiser* of 9 September 1757 at the Bath Coffee-house in Liverpool and consisted of (Fig. 19):

- 494 hogheads, 13 tierces, 4 barrels of sugar
- 19 butts, 35 hogsheads, 30 tierces and 83 barrels of coffee
- 3 butts, 7 hogsheads, 24 tierces, 31 barrels and 4 anshers of indigo
- 22 whole tanned hides
- 1,117 half-tanned hides
- 8.5 tons of logwood

This cargo typified homeward bound French merchant vessels. Sugar, coffee, indigo and logwood were common products of the colonies. Curiously, after the sale the auctioneers seem to have experienced troubles disposing of the purchased commodities. The *Public Advertiser* of 25 October 1757 recorded how:

“The Managers of the Defiance private Ships of War, John Dyer, Commander, do hereby give Notice to the Purchasers of Goods by the Marquis de Tourny, the Jupiter, the Jeune Pierre, and the Nymph, who have not yet taken their Lots away, that if they do not do so in fourteen Days from this Day, the said Lots will be put up to Sale again, and the former Purchasers will be called upon, for any Expense or Loss that may arrive on that Occasion, agreeable to the Terms of Sale, and those who have taken away their Lots, and have not paid in their Money, will lose the Benefit of the Dscompt.”

The comparative historical data for the Bordeaux-based

Le Marquis de Tourny and *Le Grand Marquis de Tourny* are crucial for reconstructing the possible cargo shipped by *La Marquise de Tourny* and its privateering history before she sank in the western English Channel. Within the constraints of the wreck's marine environment, consisting of shallow coarse sediments, almost all of the above organic produce – from cloth to foodstuffs – which comprised the majority of the shipments, would not be expected to be preserved in the archaeological record of Site 33c.

9. The Archaeology of the Privateer

Despite the vast numbers of privateers that blitzed the oceans of several continents during the War of the Austrian Succession, precious few of their wrecks have been discovered or recorded. In fact, privateer wrecks are restricted to the *Machault* off Canada, two corsairs lost off St. Malo and now *La Marquise de Tourny*. The other three sites display superior preservation that enables aspects of *La Marquise de Tourny's* potential organic cargos and original character as a corsair to be more widely envisioned.

Little data are available about other wrecks of privateers, such as *La Charmante*, wrecked in the Bay of St. Malo, France, during a privateering expedition in November 1702. Limited fieldwork on the site, which includes deposits of wood, pottery, lead hull sheathing and 140 mainly copper coins, has been conducted by DRASSM (Douillez, 2005).

The wreck of the privateer *L'Alcide*, lost in Morlaix Bay, France, in 1747, is important due to its close date to *La Marquise de Tourny*. The 180-ton, 25m long and 9m wide corsair was built in St. Malo in 1746 and was armed with 20 cannon. Excavated over three campaigns from 1985-87, human remains were found and recorded on site alongside cannon, ceramic and pewter assemblages of kitchen and table wares, apothecary objects, grey and faience unguent bottles, parts of swords, a sounding lead, navigation tools and grey glass bottles from Normandy (Appriou and Bozellec, 1997; Bozellec and Jegou, 2005). The finds have not been scientifically published.

Significantly post-dating the War of the Austrian Succession, and thus excluded from this analysis, are several additional wrecks of privateers. These include the 170-ton *Defence* mounting 16 6-pounders, which participated in the Penobscot Expedition and was lost possibly on its maiden voyage on 14 August 1779 in the largest military and naval effort mounted by the Americans during the War of Independence (the fleet of 1,000 militia and 43 vessels also included 12 privateers). While retreating from besieging the British garrison of Majabagaduce, the *Defence* was lost in

Stockton Harbor. As much as 40% of the vessel's structure is preserved in mud, including the stump of the foremast and the brick cooking stove with its copper cauldron still *in situ* (Switzer, 1998: 183). The possibility is currently being examined that the deep-sea 'Mardi Gras' wreck in the Gulf of Mexico was the American privateer *Rapid* lost in 1813 (Ford *et al.*, 2010: 95). Finally, the 67m-long, three-masted Confederate privateer the CSS *Alabama* lies in 58-60m off Cherbourg, where it was lost in 1864 (L'Hour, 2005b).

The following section focuses on the *Machault* in Canada's Gulf of St. Lawrence, the two La Natière wrecks off St. Malo and *La Marquise de Tourny* to examine whether it is feasible to refer to an archaeology of privateering through the composition of artifact assemblages, ship's structures and ordnance.

A. The Corsair Wrecks of St. Malo

Since 1999 DRASSM has been excavating two wrecks of French corsairs lost in depths of 9-19m and situated 20m apart at La Natière, 1 nautical mile from the fortification wall of St. Malo in northern Brittany (Fig. 21). Both sites are extremely well preserved, spread over an area of approximately 1,000 square meters (L'Hour and Veyrat, 2003a: 314), and have yielded an extraordinary volume and diversity of finds from part of the skeleton of a six month old monkey from Gibraltar to a three-pointed tricorne hat that once adorned a wooden figurehead and intact sections of both hulls. By the end of the 2003 excavation season a total of 1,666 artifacts had been recovered from both wrecks: 1,294 from La Natière 1 and 372 from La Natière 2 (L'Hour and Veyrat, 2003a: 315; 2004: 34). The smaller volume of finds on the second site is a result of 18th-century salvage. Two more as yet unidentified wreck sites off St. Malo, La Natière 3 and La Natière 4 (L'Hour and Veyrat, 2005a), promise the continuation of fresh knowledge in future generations.

The wreck of La Natière 1 consists of the starboard side of a ship preserved from the keel up to the gun deck. Dendrochronological dating reveals a construction date after the winter of 1702-03 (L'Hour and Veyrat, 2005a: 246). Although as yet unconfirmed in the academic literature, DRASSM has announced that the site is identifiable as the wreck of the 300-ton royal frigate *La Dauphine*, which was built in Le Havre in 1703 before King Louis IV entrusted the ship to private merchants to fit out as a privateer. *La Dauphine* was returning from an Atlantic campaign when it was lost at the entrance to the port of St. Malo on 11 December 1704.

The starboard side of the ship wrecked at La Natière 2 survives from the keel up to the second deck and has

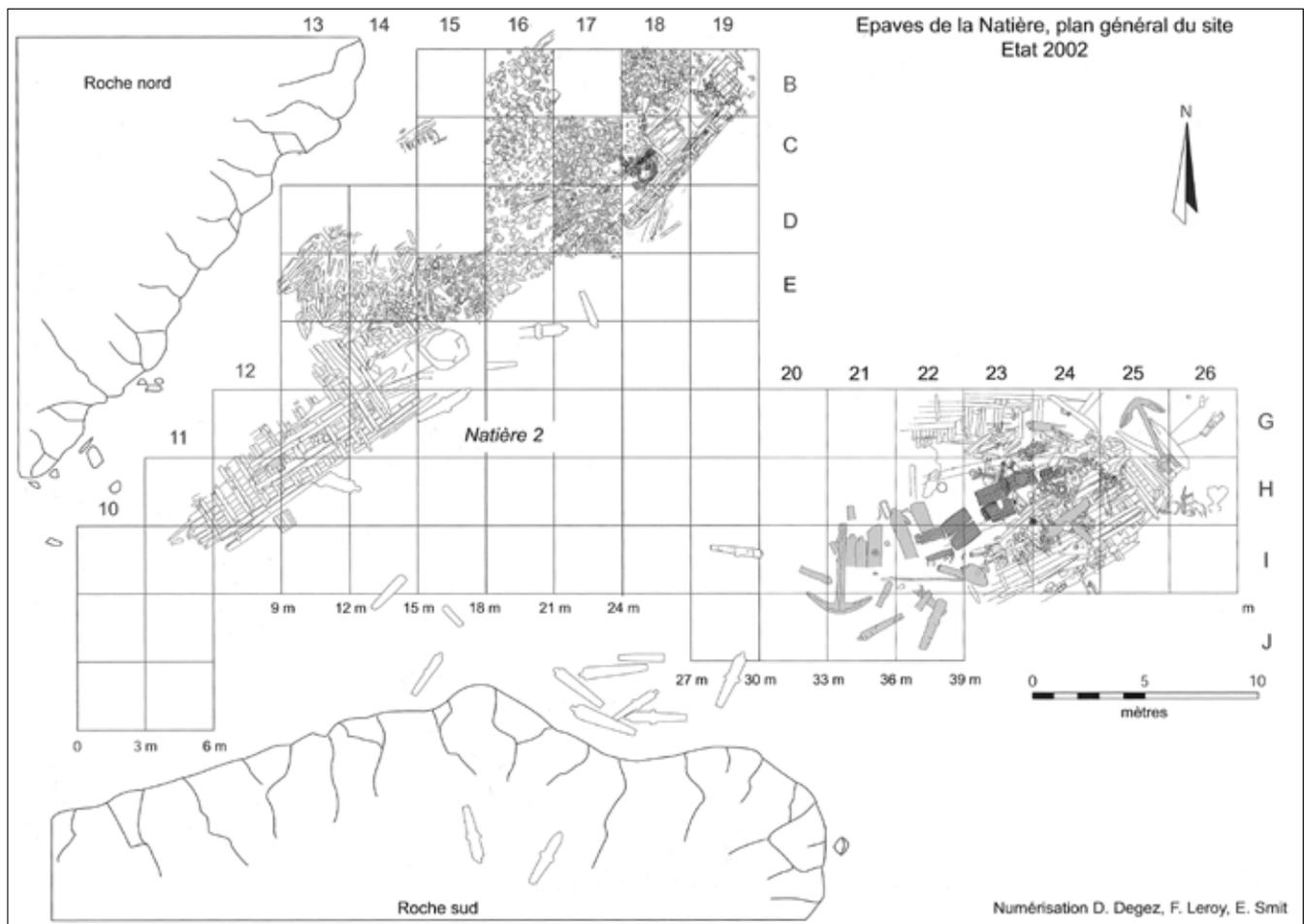


Fig. 21. Site plan of the wrecks of *La Natière 1* and *2* off St. Malo, France. Both served as corsairs and have been identified respectively as the *La Dauphine* (1704) and *L'Aimable Grenot* (1749). From: *L'Hour and Veyrat, 2003b: 107*.

been identified as the frigate *L'Aimable Grenot* lost on 6 May 1749 at the entrance to St. Malo. Built in Granville, Normandy, in 1747, this large frigate of 400 tons was fitted out as a privateer until the end of the War of the Austrian Succession in 1748, after which she traded with Spain and was en route for Cadiz when she sank.

Although *La Natière 1* (*La Dauphine*, 1704) precedes *La Marquise de Tourny* by a generation, it is nevertheless a key comparative site because it is unusually well preserved and was still operating as a privateer when it was lost. Wrecked in 1749, *La Natière 2* (*L'Aimable Grenot*) is precisely contemporary with the wreck of *La Marquise de Tourny* and would have similarly retained an element of its original domestic assemblage, as well as its principal ordnance, alongside its commercial cargo, at the time of loss.

The wreck of *La Dauphine* is one of the most extraordinarily well-preserved Colonial wrecks ever recorded. Organic remains range from the hull itself to a coconut, bundles of rope, an excessive 24 brooms, large areas of basketry, numerous carpenters tools, wooden buttons still

attached to woolen cloth, oak barrels composed of nine staves, leather shoes, an English gunner's rule inscribed with a date of 1648 and bearing the initials 'IC' (thought to relate to John Chatfield, a manufacturer of scientific equipment active in London from 1630-50: *L'Hour and Veyrat, 2005b*), double and single wooden sheave blocks, a cannon axle and truck, wooden dice and a remarkable smoking pipe protected within a pistol-shaped wooden case.

Alongside the sailors' wooden bowls and spoons, the captain and higher ranking crew used pewter wares, including 19 plates found in the 2000 and 2002 seasons, plus an additional 20 further examples discovered in 2003. Some are inscribed with the maker's mark of Joseph Hoodges of London and dates of 1691 and '170?' (presumably for 1700). The ship carried a bronze mortar and pestle, notably identical to that from the *Machault*, and associated with an apothecary kit, and bowls, a sieve and cauldron, all made of copper. Faunal analysis reveals that the crew consumed beef, pork, lamb, chicken, birds and rabbit. Wine was also apparently readily available, and 25

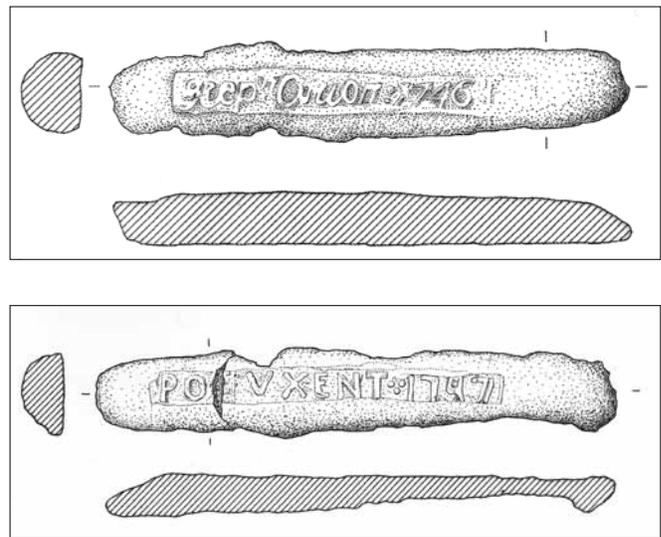
glass onion bottles were found in the 2003 season. The pottery assemblage includes a Dutch ‘Bellarmine’ jug and the ship was carrying a set of 70 merchants’ weights when she sank.

A 4m-long iron anchor with v-shaped arms is associated with the wreck of *La Dauphine*, and its iron cannon set side by side along the keel resemble possible saleable ballast. The hull had been protected in places with lead sheathing, and seven sheets examined measure between 29.5 x 26cm and 33 x 28cm and 0.35-0.5cm thick. A grappling hook may once have been used for boarding enemy craft (L’Hour and Veyrat, 2001: 55, 91, 93, 94, 96, 100, 101; 2003b: 42-3, 57, pl. 4-25).

Despite a lower volume of finds, the wreck of *L’Aimable Grenot* (1749) is equally fascinating as an example of a well-preserved ship launched as a privateer. In many ways, and despite the 45-year gap between the two sites, the material culture of La Natière 2 is not dissimilar to the earlier corsair. Again the sailors dined off wooden bowls, while higher status pewter wares are represented by spoons, eight plates and two candlesticks. The ship was again carrying an apothecary’s kit and a diverse collection of white faience unguent pots from Rouen, onion, case and elongated glass bottles, including green glass *flaçons* with corks in place comparable to the example from *La Marquise de Tourny*.

Bottles and stoneware jars originated in Normandy and small tripod pots and pitchers from Saintonge in southwest France. The ship’s galley hearth bricks measured 22.5-23 cm long, 10.5-11cm wide and were 5cm thick. The wood remains included a 15 x 5.5m section of exposed hull, a Christian cross, combs, buttons, pump wheels, carpenters tools and sheave blocks. *L’Aimable Grenot* was stocked with a complement of bronze merchants’ weights at the time of her loss. Parts of pistols have been recorded and the site is associated with an iron anchor with bow-shaped arms and its wooden stock still in place (L’Hour and Veyrat, 2002: 23, 35, 40, 44, 47, 57, 95, 96, 98-103).

By far the most graphic point of comparison between the wrecks of *La Marquise de Tourny* and *L’Aimable Grenot* is a 1m-high mound of iron ingots restricted to the western end of La Natière 2, covering an area of 6.5 x 5.5m and associated with granite, flint, calcereous and black quartzite ballast stones. The site contains between 600 and 1,000 ingots with an estimated total mass of 30-50 tons. Almost 100 ingots have been extracted from their dense concretions and a wide diversity of dimensions identified from 42-92cm long, 9-19cm wide, mainly 7-9cm tall and weighing 25-110kg (Figs. 22-23). The ingots bear molded inscriptions on their top surfaces, which read ‘Step.ⁿ. Onion’, ‘Step.ⁿ. Onion 1746’, ‘POTUXENT 1746’ and ‘POTUXENT 1747’ (L’Hour and Veyrat, 2002: 27-31).



Figs. 22-23. Examples of up to 50 tons of iron ingots transported as saleable ballast on the wreck of *L’Aimable Grenot* (1749) off St. Malo, France. Some bear the maker’s marks ‘Step.n. Onion 1746’ and ‘POTUXENT 1747’, revealing the source of manufacture in Maryland. From: L’Hour and Veyrat, 2002: 88-89, nos. 977 & 980.

This ballast on *L’Aimable Grenot* originated in the same American state as the 30 tons of inscribed iron ballast carried by the 499-ton English East Indiaman the *Griffin*, wrecked in the Sulu Sea, the Philippines, in 1761, which derived from the ‘Elk Ridge’ foundry in Maryland (Goddio, 1999: 95-7). The iron was originally processed in the Patuxent Iron Works along the Patuxent river in southern Baltimore and in the foundry of Stephen Onion, established in 1745 along the Gunpowder river in north Baltimore.

Impurities in English pig iron restricted its use to non-commercial ships’ ballast, but Colonial expansion led to the emergence of an English-backed iron industry in Maryland in 1715. Five years later a group of English investors, including Stephen Onion, founded the Principio Company and Principio Iron Works. By 1726 eight furnaces and nine forges were operating across Maryland, which in 1736 were exporting 2,458 tons of iron. Notably, seven iron ingots recovered from the French corsair the *Machault* were also stamped ‘Step.n. Onion 1746’ and are typologically identical to those on La Natière 2. Three others are marked ‘PATUXENT 1755’, while another two stamped ‘1755 YORK’ were probably manufactured in York County along the Susquehanna river near the Gunpowder and Patuxent rivers in northern Maryland. An estimated 90% of the iron ingots processed in the foundries of Maryland were used for ballasting English ships returning to Europe with cargos of American tobacco (L’Hour and Veyrat, 2002: 27-34).

L’Aimable Grenot was the third in a successive line of corsairs to be fitted out for privateering during the War

of the Austrian Succession by Léonor Couraye Duparc. The *Charles Grenot* was wrecked in 1745, after which *Le Grand Grenot* was equipped with funds raised from merchants in Rouen, Granville, St. Malo, St. Brieuc and Morlaix and set out from St. Malo for its first privateering campaign with 40 pieces of artillery on 3 March 1746. Due to its great success in seizing prizes, a third ship, *L'Aimable Grenot*, was launched on 29 January 1747 and undertook two privateering campaigns before the end of the war a year later. The third 390-ton corsair was manned by a crew of 374 and armed with 40 cannon of 4-8 pounders, 250 muskets and 150 sabres. Between the ship's two privateering campaigns of 18 August and 18 November 1748 at least 12 cannon were removed, and the end of the war resulted in a further decrease in the size of its ordnance (L'Hour and Veyrat, 2002: 69-72). *L'Aimable Grenot* was seemingly lost en route to Cadiz on a commercial venture.

B. The *Machault*

The *Machault* was originally another example of a Bordeaux corsair that sank in the Restigouche river off Chaleur Bay in the Gulf of St. Lawrence, Canada, in July 1760 and was extensively excavated by the Underwater Research Unit of Parks Canada Archaeological Research Division between 1969 and 1972 (Fig. 24). Submerged within soft, silt sediments, an extraordinary variety of organic artifacts, tools, munitions and hull survived.

The 500-ton *Machault* had sailed for Canada in April 1760 with king's supplies, similar to the dual role of the *Marquis de Tourny* in 1747 and undoubtedly its sister ship too, as part of an attempt to retake Quebec – lost in 1759 – from the English. The French fleet was attacked by the English 74- to 20-gun warships the *Fame*, *Dorsetshire*, *Achilles*, *Repulse* and *Scarborough*. The *Machault* exploded and burned on 8 July 1760. Its demise marked the last naval engagement on the high seas between France and England during the Seven Years' War, as well as the last major naval encounter between these two European powers on the North American continent (Zacharchuk, 1972; Zacharchuk and Waddell, 1986: 15-19).

The *Machault* was launched in Bayonne in 1758 as a privateer and was later refitted as a convoy vessel. It measured 39-41m in length and was 11m wide and 5.5m high between the bilges and the deck. Frames, floor timbers and inner and outer planking were built of red oak, while at 9cm outer strakes were especially thick to protect the hull from enemy fire (Sullivan, 1986: 11).

An extremely diverse collection of artifacts and hull remains were recovered from the *Machault*, which (although not strictly operating as a corsair in 1760 but as a heavily armed frigate transporting commodities and

naval stores on behalf of the king) offers a rare insight into the archaeology of French privateers operating in Canada at the end of the French Colonial era. Food, ammunition, pitch and nails were stored in 29cm-high oak kegs bound with two sets of seven willow hoops fixed to each end of barrels with iron nails. Other goods were shipped in rectangular oak chests measuring 130.6 x 53.5cm. Non-bulk commodities were discovered still wrapped in bales. Soft packages were bound with cord or metal hoops to which 2.5cm-diameter lead seals were fixed. The hand-knit woolens, a wool tuque, wool stockings, silk ribbon bows, a 17m length of rolled silk ribbon, a roll of twill-woven wool and cotton are key physical parallels to the cargo forms shipped to Canada a decade earlier.

The wreck of the *Machault* also yielded numerous shoe and knee buckles, a French silver garter buckle, cuff links, brass or pewter buttons and almost 500 new men's shoes. The contents of the carpenter's chest and a caulking mallet with spare heads and associated caulking irons were retrieved, alongside brass candle holders and snuffers, bone and horn hair combs, wrought-iron curling tongs, a pewter syringe, a bronze metal and pestle, metallic Dutch tobacco boxes engraved with biblical scenes, smoking pipes attributed to R. Tippet of Bristol, other spurred TD examples, and a third category made by Gottfried Aust of North Carolina, whose bowls were molded into the form of human effigies.

The wreck contained several dozen intact cooking pots, green-glazed French ceramic pitchers, French and English glass bottles, pewter beakers, almost 500 French ceramic bowls and plates stacked in the hold, plus a cargo of English white salt-glazed stoneware bowls, Chinese porcelain bowls, London tea wares and Chinese eggshell porcelain tea bowls and saucers. Bricks from the galley structure were found still mortared together.

Extensive standing rigging survives, such as an iron futtock plate attached to a three-hole deadeye, wooden sheaves and a mast truck. A one frame wide cross-section of the hull was cut away and lifted for exhibition, as well as a length of keel/keelson with some 10ft of framing and ceiling planking attached desired to display the system of cargo stowage inside, plus "any pieces, such as the rudder and stern assembly, which were considered of interest". A total of 40 tons of structural material was lifted from the wreck of the *Machault* (Zacharchuk and Waddell, 1986: 53). A myrtle broom may once have been used to sweep the decks clean.

Privateers were equipped with extensive sets of ordnance, and the original list of 1757 for the fitting of the *Machault* referred to a complement of 24 12-livre deck cannon, two six-livre guns for the forecastle, six swivel

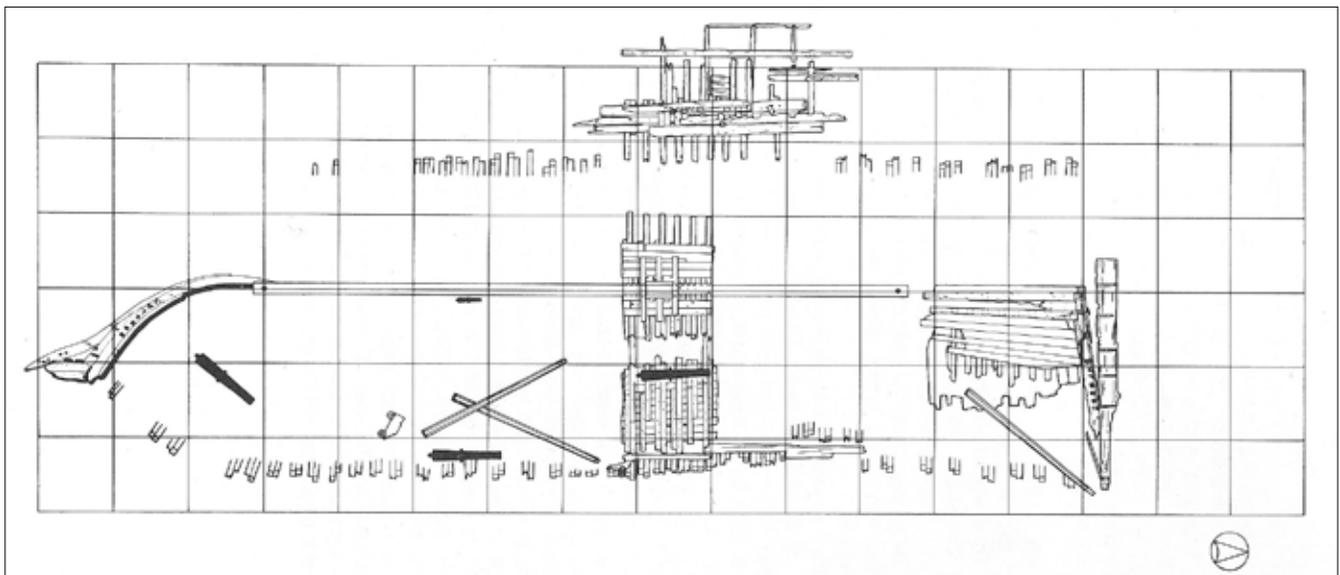


Fig. 24. Schematic site plan of the wreck of the French corsair-built Machault, blown up by English forces in the Gulf of St. Lawrence, Canada, in 1760. From: Zacharchuk and Waddell, 1986: 38.

guns, 800 12-livre cannonballs, 120 hand grenades, plus muskets, sabres and boarding axes. Extensive ordnance covered the wreck. The small arms included a minimum of 11 French *fusils grenadiers* and 10 Model 1733-34 cavalry pistols, a minimum of 10 sabres and seven *à la mousquetaire* swords for hand-to-hand combat, at least two British Long Land Pattern muskets, plus scabbards. Especially evocative of boarding parties are the site's blunderbuss, an iron hand grenade with a wooden fuse and an intact wrought-iron boarding axe.

The *Machault* fielded 26 guns when it was built, but may have been carrying 32 cannon when it sank in 1760. The three 12-livre cast-iron cannon lifted each weigh 1,364kg. Two are identical and measure 2.77m in length with bores of 12cm diameter and, precisely like the swivel cannon from *La Marquise de Tourny*, were incised with *fleur de lis* on the first reinforce, the second reinforce and muzzle parts of the tube (Fig. 25). Two identical iron swivel guns

were recovered, each 92cm long, with bores of 3.54cm and 3.89cm. One was found *in situ* along the starboard side of the ship towards the bows with its yoke still attached to the trunnions. One cannon carriage, two trucks and a swivel gun yoke completed the cannon-related fittings recovered (Bryce, 1984: 42, 47).

Some 553 iron cannonballs were lifted from the wreck, 56 multiple-shot iron and lead balls, thousands of lead pellets, six hand grenades, 58 mortar bombs, 53 bar shots, 15 star shot, three linked shot and eight canvas ammunition bags. Of the cannonballs, 538 are French and 15 possibly British, of which 304 are 12-livre cannonballs (11.3-11.7cm diam, 5.5kg each). A further 48 of the cannonballs (8.8-9.3cm diam, each 3kg weight), and 186 four-livre balls (7.8-8.0cm, each 1.9kg), would have been used for the swivels, of which 94 were cast with *fleur de lis* symbols. The iron bar, link and star shot was designed to bring down the rigging and sails of enemy ships. The

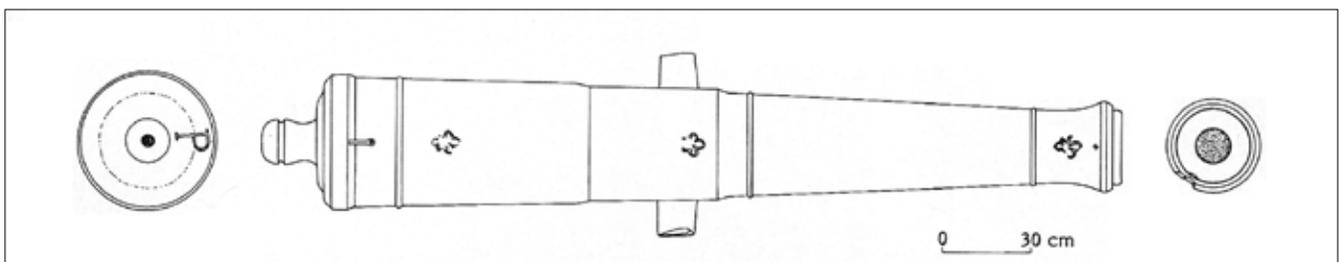


Fig. 25. A French iron 12-livre cannon from the wreck of the Machault (1760). Note the fleur de lis decoration. From: Bryce, 1984: 42, no. 56.

Machault also carried hollow cast-iron mortar bombs filled with gunpowder for firing from mortars. These presumably served as part of the cargo of naval stores (Bryce, 1984: 51).

C. *La Marquise de Tourny*

La Marquise de Tourny operated under comparable geopolitical circumstances to the *Machault* and *L'Aimable Grenot*. All three corsairs were built in France and sought out enemy prizes and carried commercial cargos either during the War of the Austrian Succession or within 15 years of its cessation. While *La Marquise de Tourny* had a burden of 460 tons, *L'Aimable Grenot* was smaller at 390 tons and the 500-ton *Machault* slightly larger.

The two *fleur de lis* symbols coarsely incised onto the reinforces of the recovered swivel gun from Site 33c are stylistically comparable to the decoration on a 12-pounder iron cannon and cannonballs from the *Machault* (Bryce, 1984: 42, 51) and on the bronze merchants' weights from *L'Aimable Grenot* (L'Hour and Veyrat, 2002: 99) and may be considered a calling card of French naval privateers and presumably warships too. The swivel gun recovered by Odyssey from Site 33c is stylistically comparable to those from the *Machault* and very similar in size: 85.5cm long with a bore width of 4.0cm compared to 92cm long and with bores of 3.54cm and 3.89cm for the 1760 wreck off Canada. Blue *flacon* glass bottles are represented on all three shipwrecks and patches of lead hull sheathing are registered on both Site 33c and on the wreck of *La Dauphine*. Such hull protection typifies all classes of craft of the era and is in no way specific to privateers.

The most notable and unexpected point of archaeological similarity on all three of the contemporary French corsairs is the most mundane: the presence of American iron ballast ingots. The possibility that the iron ballast on *La Marquise de Tourny* originated in Maryland, as confirmed on the wrecks of the *L'Aimable Grenot* and the *Machault*, is strong but requires archaeological confirmation through the recovery and study of examples from Site 33c. This pattern, however, would favor the presence of a final voyage commencing in the Americas for *La Marquise de Tourny*, a commercial sphere that her brother ship, *Le Marquis de Tourny*, had operated within in 1748. Considering the location of the shipwreck, it is also not inconceivable that *La Marquise de Tourny* was heading for St. Malo itself when disaster struck.

In all other respects, the wreck of *La Marquise de Tourny* is a very poor relative to the other sites discussed due to its extremely low level of archaeological preservation: Site 33c displays almost no hull survival, the cargo and domes-

tic assemblage are no longer present, and the absence of extensive clusters of cannonballs, shot and lead is equally puzzling. Not only are no organic objects present, but no ceramic vessels or even sherds were encountered, other than a few fragments of durable thick galley brick. The single neck of a blue glass *flacon* and a couple of patches of lead hull sheathing recorded on the surface of the site and in several soundings are an extremely low volume of finds.

Several interlocking reasons for the specific formation of Site 33c may be proposed. First, the absence of the wide variety of cannonball sizes and small arms registered on the two wrecks off La Natière and on the *Machault* favor the view that *La Marquise de Tourny* was not operating as a corsair at the time of her loss, which implies a date beyond the end of the War of the Austrian Succession in 1748 and before the Seven Years War in 1754. Unlike the *Machault*, *La Marquise de Tourny* is unlikely to have been carrying naval supplies for a French war initiative, but was still equipped with her ordnance. The abundance of iron ingots points to an incoming journey from the Americas with an organic cargo, which has completely deteriorated today.

Second, the shallow sediments, localized at an average of 15cm and maximum of 40cm, do not favor high levels of preservation on Site 33c. However, the absence of multiple pottery and glass sherds, which would be anticipated to be at least detected typically wedged in crevices between ordnance and ballast, is anomalous. Despite the significant depth of Site 33c in around 80m, the site formation typifies the most highly dynamic of shallow-water sites located on rocky seabeds, where currents heavily scramble wreckage. Obviously this is invalid in the current case, which leads to the conclusion that the site has been disturbed by some other phenomenon.

Site 33c's formation is most rationally explicable through extensive post-depositional disturbance caused by the offshore fishing industry. Fishing net fragments are snagged on concretions and cannon, and were identified buried within the shipwreck's matrix. Two of the cannon, C-01 and C-22, lie over 35m away from the site and may have been dragged by trawlers. Vessel Monitoring Systems data recorded by satellite observed 109 fishing vessels operating within 1,000m of Site 33c and 27 within 500m of the wreck just for the period between 2000 and 2008: 72.5% beam trawlers, 10.1% lobster/crab potters and 4.6% scallop dredges. The wreck of *La Marquise de Tourny* thus serves as another unfortunate example of the serious impacts inflicted on internationally important shipwrecks in the western English Channel. Reconstructions of the anatomy and history of this badly preserved wreck rely heavily on comparative archaeology and historical sources.

10. Conclusion

The archaeology and image of the world of the corsair and the privateer are often misunderstood. C.B. Norman succinctly summarized the exaggerated perception in *The Corsairs of France* (London, 1887: 3):

“He is generally depicted as a rollicking dare-devil whose waistbelt was a perfect armoury and whose pockets were full of doubloons. Eschewing nearer seas he sailed the Spanish main, seized all craft that came within his reach, treated his prisoners with the utmost generosity, sometimes with the most refined cruelty, and generally ended his career by being compelled to ‘walk the plank’ after falling a victim to a ship of war, which disguised as a ‘Quaker’ enticed the unsuspecting Corsair alongside her well-manned decks. Nothing can be more erroneous. The Corsair was a recognized and important factor in the wars of the past centuries, when naval estimates assumed more modest proportions than they do in this the later quarter of the Nineteenth Century. The rules which governed his conduct were clear and well defined.”

Throughout the War of the Austrian Succession privateers on all sides disrupted shipping and enriched their crews and the sentiments of the *Observer* of 10 June 1702 remained valid four decades later: privateering was still one of the “props of this island, being both so useful & necessary to trade and navigation, and to the poor of these kingdoms” (Starkey, 1990: 253). In the final analysis following nine years of prize hunting, however, the concept of privateering proved to be a short-term, false economy. Neither side enhanced its colonial trade and each party received very heavy losses.

Anson’s expeditionary force that circumnavigated the world to attack Spanish ports and vessels and ultimately to seek the world’s richest contemporary treasure ship resulted in unacceptable fatalities and would be the last time the Royal Navy dispatched warships to try and cripple trade by hunting down individual ships. Of the six men-of-war that began the epic voyage, bearing 236 guns and manned by a crew of 1,510 people (Hervey, 1750: 184), increased to a total of 1,939 with the hands on two victualling ships, only the *Centurion* made it home to England. Some 1,051 of the crew died of disease and exposure, including all 500 Chelsea pensioners that the Admiralty had unwisely imposed on Anson (Pack, 1960: 20).

The voyage of the *Centurion* had little political, strategic or economic influence on the outcome of the war. The capture of the *Cobadonga* may have cheered the hearts of England, but hardly turned the political tide. While the public lapped up the story of the venture, the sailors were even forced to go to Court for a share of the prize. The supernumeraries who had been commanded by superior

Product	1722-1724	1752-1754
Coffee	£123,000	£53,000
Cotton	£45,000	£56,000
Dyestuffs	£155,000	£98,000
Oil	£26,000	£43,000
Silk	£50,000	£94,000
Skins & Hides	£34,000	£46,000
Sugar	£928,000	£1,302,000
Tea	£116,000	£334,000
Tobacco	£263,000	£560,000

Table 1. Comparative values of English commodity imports from Asia, Africa and America (annual averages) (compiled from Price, 1998: 100).

officers to abandon their own warships and join the *Centurion* were by law not entitled to the money from the Spanish galleon because they did not comprise the official complement of the *Centurion*. For all their hard work, they came away with nothing despite appealing to the House of Lords. As one of the supernumeraries wrote, “we had more terrible engagements in the courts of law than we ever had on the high seas” (Heaps, 1973: 253).

Long-term, however, the effects of the experience were wide-ranging. Of the expeditions officers, six went on to become admirals and George Anson made First Lord of the Admiralty to become the ‘father of the Royal Navy’, introducing a suite of improvements in ships, equipment and conditions. In 1747 he reformed naval war tactics and a year later rolled out the first uniforms for officers. Anson went on to introduce the Line of Bearing, founded the Articles of War, which lasted till 1865, and established the Royal Marines. The coppering of ships’ hulls was also his initiative (Anson, 1912: 182, 185; Pack, 1960: 1, 5-6).

Unexpectedly, arguably the most enduring by-product of the round-the-world voyage of the *Centurion* was the impact of the suffering and death of the crews from scurvy. When Anson left England in 1739 the cause of the disease was unknown and the only medicine available was a useless and violent purgative called Dr. Ward’s Drop and Pill. The loss of life from the disease recorded on Anson’s expedition was so acute that Dr. James Lind of Haslar Naval Hospital was inspired to study the disease and publish his *Treatise on the Scurvy* in 1753, which he dedicated to Anson and which proved convincingly that the simple remedy was a lemon or an orange, but not a lime. It would nevertheless take the conservative Admiralty a further 40 years to issue lemon juice to crews who had been on salt provisions for six weeks (Heaps, 1973: 13).

On the domestic front the War of the Austrian Succession has been defined as a sterile conflict, which ended few of the European rivalries. The struggle between Prussia and the Habsburgs in Germany remained as bitter as ever. As the Austrian statesman Count Wenzel Anton von Kaunitz wrote, “We are entering a house made of cardboard. We shall have to see whether we think of making from it something more solid” (Anderson, 1995: 210). The dream of expanding British trade proved equally illusory.

Even if the British capture of Louisbourg reduced France’s transatlantic trade to a trickle by the end of the war (Johnston, 1983), this was a small return for the ultimate cost of the war and was counterbalanced by the loss of Madras and the failure to exert any further commercial control over the French West Indian islands (Anderson, 1995: 218). Some 100,000 soldiers and perhaps as many as 400,000 civilians died during the war and by 1747 stock prices in Britain had dropped ominously to levels not witnessed since 1724 (Browning, 1994: 328, 376). On balance, privateers’ capture of enemy ships did not enhance England’s position in colonial trade. Even if England did take an impressive 3,316 Spanish, French and other ships, the enemy in turn captured 3,493 English vessels. The net product was a stalemate.

Moreover, King George II’s war badly disrupted long-distance trade. Commerce between France and the West Indies did drop by nearly 50% between 1743 and 1745 and Cuban tobacco to Spain fell by 17% in 1745-49. The total value of Havana’s non-peninsular commerce declined by 54% in the years 1735-40. Britain though was equally hit hard. Exports from the British West Indies to Britain fell by 18% in 1744 and from North America by 25%. Caribbean purchases of British goods dropped by 37% and North American consumption by 23% in 1744 (Swanson, 1991: 184, 186).

As the dangers of preying privateers escalated, so freight costs and insurance rates rocketed. In 1740 freight charges on Chesapeake tobacco cargos rose by 35% over peacetime levels. By spring 1748 Charlestown merchant Henry Laurens reported that it cost 86% more to ship a ton of rice to London than in 1739 when the war had started. Within the sphere of West Indian sugar trade, the busiest concern in the colonies, the cost of shipping a hundredweight of sugar from Barbados to London increased by 29% when war with Spain was announced; at the height of the war it peaked at double the peacetime freight costs. The mood of autumn 1744 was well captured by the American merchant John Reynell, who complained that “Trading is Exceeding dead here; hardly anything goes forward but Privateering” (Swanson, 1991: 188, 190).

The heavy commercial losses inflicted on all sides are

comprehensively reflected by the obsessive lists of privateer captures published throughout the war in the *Gentleman’s Quarterly*. They are not, however, entirely accurate statistics for the volumes and characters of cargos in circulation. The very low frequency of references to shipments of Chinese ceramics vastly underestimates the flow of what must have been a considerable bulk commodity carried as space fillers amongst larger cargos.

The under-representation of shipments of tea is a more inexplicable anomaly. Only three cargos of tea are registered amongst the French prizes of 1739-48 and none amongst the Spanish or English consignments. Two more shipments are listed under unknown prizes and six as smugglers taken by English ships. This pattern exposes the problems inherent amongst the newspaper sources. Whereas coffee was not the drink of choice in England, where still as late as 1756-75 almost 94% of this imported commodity was re-exported to the Low Countries, Germany and northern Europe (Price, 1998: 86), tea was highly popular (Table 1).

Tea imports monopolized by the East India Company would increase one hundredfold in value from some £80,000 in 1699-1701 to £848,000 in the period 1772-4 (Price, 1998: 83). The 1740s was a pivotal decade in the establishment of tea in the sitting rooms of middle England. In 1713 the East India Company had established trade links with Canton and tea consumption doubled in the 1730s and 1740s. This trend is mirrored in the import of tea service equipment, such as tea kettles, teapots, and teaspoons, which were only found in 10% of the households of Kent after 1720 but by the 1740s were registered in 74% of Kentish homes (Overton *et al.*, 2004: 106).

Britain’s favorite hot beverage continued to reach kitchens throughout the war despite some sharp fluctuations: in 1740 the East India Company sold 1.653 million pounds weight of tea in Britain, 691,000 lbs in 1742, 911,000 lbs in 1743, 2,463,000 lbs in 1745 and 282,000 lbs in 1747 (Mui and Mui, 1986: 184). The very low presence of cargos of tea in lists of captured English prizes is again possibly explained by an apparent unwillingness to publicize British losses as gushingly as in the case of enemy losses. Or was tea transported on better armed or convoy-protected East Indiamen? The sources discussed in this paper thus need to be used with a degree of caution.

Finally, is it realistic to refer to an archaeology of privateering? The very few wrecks of ships launched or lost as privateers currently recorded or published seriously hinder this discipline. The subject is also complicated by the reinvention of privateers as merchant vessels outside times of wars. Hence, neither seemingly *La Marquise de Tourny*, the *Machault* or *L’Aimable Grenot* were technically cruising

for prey when they were lost at sea. The *Alcide* is an exception but no scientific report of the wreck has as yet materialized. This leaves *La Dauphine* as the only known and well published corsair recorded for the 18th century, yet pre-dating 1739 by 35 years is only of general comparative interest to the War of the Austrian Succession.

Despite these reservations, the cannon and guns and cannonballs inscribed with *fleur de lis* on the *Machault*, as well as the ship's preserved cloth and lace, serves as an important physical source for reconstructing the kinds of cargo once carried by *La Marquise de Tourny*. The Dutch 'Bellarmine' jug and English gunner's rule, glass bottles and pewter wares on the French *Dauphine* caution against blindly accepting material culture found on any privateer – such as Site 33c's blue glass *flacon* neck – as indicative in isolation of a wrecked vessel's nationality.

Unexpectedly, and fortuitously considering the very poor level of Site 33's preservation, it is the iron ballast that serves as an intriguing touchstone for future research. Its form is conspicuously comparable to the iron ballast ingots manufactured in Maryland found on *L'Aimable Grenot* and *La Machault* and reflects the dual role of corsairs in war and trade operating between Europe and the Americas.

For now, Odyssey has completed its preliminary investigation of the wreck of *La Marquise de Tourny*. Future missions could concentrate on additional analysis of the iron cannon and the matter of whether moulded inscriptions survive on the upper surfaces of the iron ballast. Beyond that, with its organic cargo, small finds, wooden rigging blocks and even pottery destroyed or deteriorated by time and tide, and further destroyed by endemic beam trawling and other forms of fishing, Site 33c is an example of a wreck within the western English Channel that has been mechanically ground down to the stage where little tangible evidence survives. Merely the most robust objects endure on the site of the world's deepest privateer, an inglorious end to its daring life during the War of the Austrian Succession.

Acknowledgements

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I am indebted to Richard Keen for discussing the St. Malo corsairs from La Natière site with me and to generously making several reports available. Kathy Evans patiently and efficiently processed and made sense of the documentation captured from the *Le Marquis de Tourny* in 1748, which was sourced by Patrick Lize and Simon Davidson; Lange Winckler generously commented on this text and clarified certain points, and John Griffith generated the VMS fishing data related to the Site 33c region. Many thanks to Alice Copeland for proofreading this text. The research into *La Marquise de Tourny* was initially enthusiastically kick-started by Jason Williams and his team at JWM Productions, with whom, along with the Discovery Channel, it has been a pleasure to work. As ever, Melissa Dolce has toiled relentlessly and with great charm on the design of this report. All errors within this Paper are my own.

Notes

1. The specific sections of the *Gentleman's Quarterly* examined for obtaining statistics about captured privateers of all nations between 1739 and 1748 are: *Supplement to the Gentleman's Magazine for the Year 1741*, Vol. XI, 689-98; *Gentleman's Magazine*, January 1743, Vol. XIII, 23-24; August 1743, Vol. XIII, 419-20; August 1743, Vol. XIII, 473-75; *Supplement to the Gentleman's Magazine for Year 1743*, 699-700; *Gentleman's Magazine*, May 1744, Vol. XIV, 260-66; June 1744, Vol. XIV, 310-12; July 1744, Vol. XIV, 365-67; August 1744, Vol. XIV, 422-24; January 1745, Vol. XV, p.49: list of privateers; February 1745, Vol. XV, 79-80; March 1745, Vol. XV, 153-54; April 1745, Vol. XV, 211-12; May 1745, Vol. XV, 262-63; June 1745, Vol. XV, 302-303 and 330; July 1745, Vol. XV, 351-52; August 1745, Vol. XV, 436-37; *Supplement to the Gentleman's Magazine for Year 1745*, Vol. XV, 691-96; *Gentleman's Magazine*, February 1746, Vol. XVI, 63-64; April 1746, Vol. XVI, 180-82; May 1746, Vol. XVI, 238-39; June 1746, Vol. XVI, 285-86; July 1746, Vol. XVI, 347-48; September 1746, Vol. XVI, 458-60; November 1746, Vol. XVI, 582-84; December 1746, Vol. XVI, 695-98; February 1747, Vol. XVII, 91-2; April 1747, Vol. XVII, 195-96; May 1747, Vol. XVII, 235-36; June 1747, Vol. XVII, 287-88; July 1747, Vol. XVII, 333-35; September 1747, Vol. XVII, 429-32; October 1747, Vol. XVII, 482-83; November 1747, Vol. XVII, 532-33; *Supplement to the Gentleman's Magazine for the Year 1747*, Vol. XVII, 606-609; *Gentleman's Magazine*,

January 1748, Vol. XVIII, 35; February 1748, Vol. XVIII, 83; March 1748, Vol. XVIII, 126-28; April 1748, Vol. XVIII, 173-74; May 1748, Vol. XVIII, 226-27; June 1748, Vol. XVIII, 267-69; July 1748, Vol. XVIII, 322-23; August 1748, Vol. XVIII, 367-68; September 1748, Vol. XVIII, 418-19; *Supplement to the Gentleman's Magazine for the Year 1748*, Vol. XVIII, 593-94.

2. The *Gentleman's Magazine* for 1744 (Vol. XIV, 592) reported that the *Marquis de Tourny*, Captain Gorer, from St. Domingo for France, was captured and carried into Jamaica. In turn, in December 1746 the "Marquis de Tournay" took the *Charlton* from Cork to Antigua and the *Fanny* from Liverpool to Africa (*Gentleman's Magazine*, December 1746, Vol. XVI, 696-97).

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