“Getting Our Butts In”: Sailors’ Graffiti on the Tank Bay Water Catchment in English Harbour, Antigua

By

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ABSTRACT

Graffiti carved by 18th century British Royal Navy sailors reside on a stone rainwater catchment just outside the walls of Nelson’s Dockyard National Park in English Harbour, Antigua. 191 engravings of names, dates, and ships are investigated using the remaining archaeological material and primary sources housed in The National Archives of the UK. The graffiti is recorded, interpreted, and cataloged. Quantitative analysis reveals trends in the graffiti’s contents, and how their creation correlated with the levels of activity in Nelson’s Dockyard over the 18th century. Qualitative analysis discusses motifs frequently observed in the collection, and evidence of social conventions among those carving graffiti. Combining ships’ logbooks, muster roles, and paybooks reveals some graffitists’ identities, their experiences sailing the 18th century Caribbean, and the circumstances under which they made their carvings. The graffitists’ motivations are examined via comparison to current-day guestbooks at weddings, funerals, and travelers’ lodges. Recommendations are offered for future research on the catchment graffiti and hypothetical related sites.

“Getting Our Butts In”: Sailors’ Graffiti on the Tank Bay Water Catchment in English Harbour, Antigua

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By
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Dedication

I dedicate this project to the sailor-graffitists, whose journeys I followed from Antigua to England.

Their small acts of self-expression made my world more wondrous nearly three hundred years later.

Acknowledgments:

I'd first like to thank my advisor, Dr. Lynn Harris. She organized the two Antigua field schools alongside Dr. Jennifer McKinnon and Dr. Jason T. Raupp, providing me with the opportunity to record the catchment graffiti. I'm grateful for her support throughout this rather unorthodox project. Dr. Eric Oakley encouraged me to present my initial findings at the 2024 Southeast World History Association conference and offered guidance and a listening ear as I struggled with burnout toward the end of my time at ECU. Dr. David J. Stewart encouraged my interest in historical graffiti, and I'm glad to have had his good humor and valuable insights into the day-to-day lives of 18th century sailors. I'd also like to thank ECU Staff archaeologist Jeremy Borrelli for first showing me the catchment graffiti, inspiring me to pursue it as a thesis topic.

Special thanks go to two of my classmates. Alex Morrow helped me record the catchment graffiti in the hot sun (see him in figure 1.1) when he could have been enjoying a cold refreshment anywhere else. Krysta Rogers rescued me when I accidentally stranded myself in Antigua, letting me crash her well-deserved vacation weekend.

I would like to thank Nelson's Dockyard National Park and its staff for welcoming and accommodating this research, Dr. Christopher Waters for providing scans of the Antiguan Assembly Sessionals, and the local who emerged from the Galley Bar to ask me if I was a mermaid.

High praise goes to the amazing people at the National Archives of the UK for their efficiency and flexibility in producing documents, some of which I ordered impromptu on the same day; and especially to the staff who hauled all those heavy tomes to and from the large documents counter. Appreciation also goes to the friendly security staff I kept company while I ate lunch on the floor outside the reading room.

This thesis owes its existence to the 150 enslaved Africans who constructed the Tank Bay catchment in the Summer of 1734.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

A stone water catchment north of English Harbour, Antigua, (Figure 1.1) is blanketed with hand-carved names and dates from 1737 to 1782. Cursory reading reveals the names of British Royal Navy ships, indicating that at least some writers were 18th century English sailors. Further examination indicates that the plurality of dates coincides with the 1739-1744 War of Jenkins' Ear. After this period, the frequency of graffiti declined with each passing decade. Many carvings have lost words and numbers to erosion or have entirely faded beyond recognition. One person's scratches might intrigue curiosity; a stone guestbook of nearly two hundred knife-drawn signatures puts the imagination in motion. Where there was once an undocumented tradition now stands a commemoration of nearly two hundred Caribbean voyages, a monument to sailors who rejected anonymity and left a part of themselves behind to outlast their own lives.

Fig 1.1. The Tank Bay rainwater catchment. (Photo by author, 2023.)

Research Questions and Justification

This study's primary research goal is to contextualize the graffiti and identify its authors.

Supporting goals include determining the graffiti's contents through systematic documentation and analysis; connecting trends among the graffiti to historical events in English Harbour and the 18th century Caribbean; determining what circumstances brought its many authors to the catchment, English Harbour, and the Caribbean; and developing a theory accounting for the authors' motivations. A key methodological goal is determining exactly how much can be learned about these cryptic carvings with the few leads available, and to what degree of confidence.

With every hurricane season, more of the catchment graffiti crumbles and fades beyond recognition. The photographs and subsequent catalog amassed in this study preserve the contents of this unique cultural resource for public knowledge and enable cross-examination in the event that similar sites are located elsewhere in the Leeward Islands. Whereas some historic maritime graffiti was commissioned by ships' captains for commemorative and communicative purposes (Raupp et al. 2018; Frescura 2018), the catchment graffiti is a unique case of their subordinates making monuments to their own personal journeys and survival. Their carvings are a welcome reminder of historic sailors' individuality, which is easily forgotten in historiography fixated on inanimate ships commanded by venerated captains and admirals. Such a unique site deserves proper historical-archaeological investigation before it vanishes entirely.

Historical Background

The Tank Bay Catchment

17th and 18th century Antigua had devoted nearly all of its arable land to growing sugar and other cash crops, depending wholly on overseas trade for sustenance and economic prosperity (Waters 2018:28). Spanish and French privateers preying on merchant vessels posed a serious enough threat to food insecurity that the Antiguan government endeavored to attract a permanent British Navy presence on the island to deter the depredations (Waters 2018:7). In 1725, a careening wharf was constructed at English Harbour at Antiguan taxpayers' expense, around which the Royal Naval Dockyard was built

over the following decades (Waters 2018:28). The peninsula at the mouth of English Harbour acted as breakwater against hurricane torrents (Weaver 2002), allowing the British Navy to leave its ships in this Caribbean "hurricane hole" (Harris 2015) year-round, instead of sending them home for the season (Waters 2018:28). By leveraging this geographic resource, the Antiguan government successfully tied the Navy to the island (Waters 2018:28).

The greatest drawback of developing a naval base on Antigua was the island's perpetual scarcity of fresh water. The island had few natural springs, so its residents subsisted largely on rainwater caught and drained into cisterns (Harris 2015). On March 1, 1734, the Antiguan Assembly commissioned a large rainwater catchment for reprovisioning navy ships in English Harbour (Antiguan Assembly 1734). White planters were required to send 1 per 100 of those they enslaved to construct the catchment, and would were refunded the assessed value of said person(s) if they perished during the project (Antiguan Assembly 1734). Construction was completed by July 3rd of that year (ADM 106/854/192) by a team of 150 enslaved people (ADM 106/854/1). Assembly Sessionals do not offer a clear picture of their circumstances. Death or permanent debilitation were clearly possibilities, given the Act's provision for reimbursing their captors. Such transactions would have crossed the treasurer's desk, but they do not appear in the assembly minutes (Antiguan Assembly 1734), so it is unclear if anyone was severely hurt during the project. Further legislation extended their time in this state after the catchment's completion, and the same group was sent directly to projects at Fort Berkeley and Monks Hill (Antiguan Assembly 1734). Nearly three centuries later, The catchment they toiled to build supplies the current-day English Harbour community with fresh water to wash cars with, saving scarce potable water. This project only exists because of them.

Today, the catchment floor has approximate dimensions of 57m x 32m, deviating significantly from the 30mx30m prescribed in the Act (Antiguan Assembly 1734). Dockyard surveys as early as

1745 (Figure 1.2) depict the catchment as rectangular in roughly identical proportions to what exists today (Martel 1745; Horneck 1752; British Royal Navy Unknown Surveyor 1769), so it was likely originally built to that longer dimension.

1745 1769 2017

Fig 1.2. Maps depicting the catchment. *Left,* 1745 survey (Martel 1745), *Center* 1769 survey (British Royal Navy Unknown Surveyor 1769), *Right* 2017 satellite view (Google 2025). Scales equal those included in each survey.

Since the catchment floor deviated from the original plan, it is possible that the cisterns could also be larger or otherwise different from the prescribed 12.192m length and 3.048 meters depth and width (Antiguan Assembly 1734). Since no one on record has descended into their dark and putrid depths to verify, the Act's are the only numbers to go on, which indicate a capacity of just over 77 tons register of rainwater.

Watering at English Harbour

Fresh water was essential to a warship company's survival. By the early-mid 18th century, the British Navy had connected disease to the untreated water spoiling in rotten, worm-infested (ADM 51/794) casks, and had taken to mixing it with wine and spirits for safer consumption (Rodger 1986:

91-92). Cooking also required fresh water, as did washing ships and sailors' garments to prevent epidemics (Rodger 1986:108-9). The bulk of fresh water was stored in the ground tier, a permanent ballast to be consumed in emergencies (Rodger 1986:91) that was frequently cycled out due to spoilage (ADM 51/794). The combined needs 200-500 people (ADM 36/3488; ADM 33/392) frequently demanded large quantities of fresh water. The construction of a catchment and cisterns capable of storing 77 tons of water (Antiguan Assembly 1734) made English Harbour an even more attractive place to careen and repair ships.

Careening presented a convenient opportunity to fetch water. The first step in heeling a ship at English Harbour was offloading heavy, easily-damaged items to make the ship safer and easier heave over, including cannon, powder, and many of the ground tier casks (ADM 51/309). Once the casks were offloaded, a team rowed them across the harbor to the wharf on the west bank of Tank Bay to refill at the catchment, before the ship was righted and loaded again (ADM 51/309). The number of men sent likely depended on the number of oars on board, as the lack of wind in English Harbour (Harris 2015) necessitated rowing the multiple-ton (Rodger 1986:41) longboat across the harbor instead of using its sails. One accident while watering at St Lucia caused *Roebuck's* longboat to sink, which is reported to have been 26 feet long (ADM 51/794)). 26-foot longboats typically had 7 pairs of oars (May 1999:53); plus one person steering amounts to fifteen hands on the watering trip. *Roebuck*'s longboat was on the smaller side (May 1999:53), so fifteen people is a reasonable conservative estimate. *Roebuck's* logbook regularly reports seven to twelve puncheons collected on each trip (ADM 51-794) twelve puncheons equals 45.812 cubic meters or 3,815 kilograms of fresh water, meaning that each of the fifteen people hoisted 254.34 kg of water into casks, or roughly 3.5 times their own body weight. The number of watering trips likely varied with the size of the longboat, the amount of water needed, and how much water was actually stored in the catchment.

Casks were probably transported to and from catchment and back on some sort of wheeled cart due to their immense weight when filled (318 kg in each puncheon), and because they were too expensive to carelessly roll around on the ground (Morriss 2013). The two wells descending into the cisterns were only accessible from the catchment floor, so casks would have been wheeled in through a gap in the Southeast wall for easier filling (gap visible in Figure 1.2 Left). The gap would have been replaceable to ensure that water properly drained into the cisterns instead of spilling out of the floor (somewhat accomplished today by a large, immovable hunk of asphalt).

Since the cisterns are only ten feet deep, a leather bucket and pulley would have been sufficient to draw up water. *Anglesea*'s crew lost their leather bucket while watering at St. Johns, Antigua (ADM 52/339), and Roebuck's bucket and some lifting gear went down with the longboat in St. Lucia (ADM 51/794), suggesting that bucket-hoisting was the typical procedure. No evidence of a permanent mechanical pump has been confirmed at the catchment site nor in historical documentation, but it would have made sense to install one at each cistern for more efficient filling (locals today have a gas-powered pump in place to draw water for washing their cars). Without better evidence to the contrary, the bucket-pulley is assumed. We can infer that it would have taken several hours, since there were only one or two buckets to collect upwards of 45 cubic meters of water.

This left plenty of downtime throughout, since raising one or two buckets hardly required fifteen or more people working at once. Those not actively working the rope might have napped in the shade, wandered the dockyard outskirts, or taken a moment to peruse the growing collection of stylized carvings. By March of 1740 there would have been about twenty markings (treating dated entries as representative of the entire assemblage, discussed in chapter 3); by March of 1745, the collection had grown to about eighty-eight, a well-worn guestbook signed throughout the past decade. With ample time, inspiration, and a personal knife all sailors carried (Bown 2003:21) , individuals carved their

names or initials, sometimes adding the date, and only rarely adding more. Some made bolder, more ornate works than others, likely varying with individuals' interest, literary and artistic ability, time allotted, and willingness to stand, squat, or lay in a reflective basin in the hot Antiguan sun. They could always return to continue their projects if there were more watering trips planned during their stop in English Harbour.

Prior Archaeology

The Catchment

The most in-depth prior investigation of the catchment graffiti was by Desmond V. Nicholson in 1999. He and his team photographed and recorded the graffiti, locating entries on coordinate planes designated for each wall, amounting to "a long list of graffiti too extensive for publication" (Nicholson 1999). His list identifies a reference to HMS *Captain* (Nicholson 1999), a 70-gun third rate English warship (Winfield 2007) that visited in 1748 (ADM 106/1061/381); which escaped the present study due to "Capto^{n}" fading over the last two decades (Figure 1.3). His sketch leaves out the authors first name, today only visible by its superscript 'o' typical of an abbreviated "John" or "Thomas" (ADM 33/392); anyone interested in this author should look seek out a "John Rule" or "Thomas Rule" within *Captain*'s 1748 muster or paybook in the manner described in Chapter 3. Nicholson also alludes to an instance of pornography (Nicholson 1999), likely referring to the entry in which one sailor[-mouth] spells out a solitary "Runt" with a 'C'.

Nicholson determines another entry to be in reference to a captured Spanish vessel *Tajara* (Nicholson 1999). He does not cite a source on this vessel, no record of it was located in this study, and there are no other prize ships referenced on the catchment. The entry in question spells out 'TAJARA', with an additional 'RA' located above, and an additional "JC" below. The even number of characters and the two pairs above and below suggest that this entry is a collection of 3-5 peoples' initials, rather than a Spanish mystery-ship. Nicholson claims that the decline in graffiti over the 18th century was

caused by an order given *at some point* for the catchment to only be used by dockyard artificers (Nicholson 1999). Again, he does not include a source, which is frustrating when such a document would almost single-handedly answer a key research question. No source supporting his claim was found, discussed in Chapter 6.

Fig 1.3. Rule of HMS Captain. *Left,* 2023 photograph (Photo by author, 2023); *right,* Nicholson's 1999 sketch (Nicholson 1999).

Nicholson's study was found regrettably late into this project. His to-scale coordinate-plane method would have resulted in precise entry locations, whereas the current catalog only defines which wall entries were carved on and places them relative to one another. If his photographs were obtained, we might be able to assess graffiti as it was with twenty-two years' less erosion. An advantage of the present study is that the 2023 photographs are likely of much higher quality than what Nicholson had available in 1999. This technological edge enabled extensive in-house analysis of the graffiti with little loss in detail, yielding what is probably a more complete catalog. This investigation discerned the names of seven ships, but it would have eight with Nicholson's then-intact *Captain* entry. It should also be noted that only the "shortened version" of Nicholson's study was located. The full-length version was not located after a much more extensive search and may not have been published. He published a 20-page booklet on the subject (probably just the paper with larger pictures) but attempts to obtain it for this literature review were unsuccessful.

Another study of the catchment graffiti is by Rob Finch in 2020. His article is largely speculative, pointing to possible identities of ships referenced on the catchment and suggesting that

then-captain Horatio Nelson might have somehow put an end to graffiti creation in the latter half of the 18th century (Finch 2020), but no source is provided. Finch's nineteen photographs include a scale bar (Finch 2020), which, regrettably, is missing in photographs from the present study, so Finch's remains the best starting point for determining the exact sizes of entries.

A preliminary study of the catchment graffiti was included in the ECU Maritime Studies June 2023 Field School Report. The catchment's dimensions and construction were identified, its graffiti photographed, and the integrity of the carved surfaces were assessed (Harris et al. 2023). According to the report, the graffiti is in immediate peril from hurricane rainfalls and deterioration in one section where hoses from a carwash are frequently tossed over the wall (Harris et al. 2023). A clear weatherproofing coat is recommended to preserve what graffiti remains on the catchment (Harris et al. 2023); The catalog assembled in the present study preserves their contents for future study (Appendix A).

Other Relevant Studies

In 2018, Jason T. Raupp, Anne E. Wright, and Omar Fernández López investigated a substantial collection of maritime-related graffiti on Cocos Island, Costa Rica. The most prominent demographic reflected in the carvings are whalers stopping throughout the late eighteenth and mid-nineteenth centuries to reprovision wood and water (Raupp et al. 2018). By the carvings' contents and available historical documentation, it is most likely that a tradition of commemorating the visit had sprung up among sailors visiting the island (Raupp et Al. 2018). Most interesting is that one of the earlier carvings is documented as having been explicitly commissioned by a ship's captain to commemorate their stop (Raupp et al. 2018). Additionally, there are over twice as many inscriptions of a ship's name with a date as there are inscriptions of an individual's name or initials with a date (Raupp et al. 2018). These circumstances suggest that the tradition was primarily one of commemorating the visits of entire *ships,* rather than those of individual *sailors.* This stands in sharp contrast to the assemblage on the English

Harbour catchment, where only twelve of the 191 entries include a ship's name, and each of those twelve also include an individual's name. On the catchment, every ship's name comes after the person's name, either to the right or below, indicating that the ships are secondary material invoked by a few sailors to describe *themselves.* The catchment assemblage indicates a tradition of self-memorialization, rather than one of collective memorialization as seen on Cocos Island.

The authenticity of historic graffiti cannot be taken for granted. In 2013, Wendy van Duivenvoorde, Mark E. Polzer and Peter J. Downes published an article demonstrating that two carvings associated with Dutch East India Company shipwrecks off Australia in 1656 and 1712 are, in fact, works by "enthusiasts" of the most recent century (van Duivenvoorde et Al. 2013). Their results are convincing, reached via a combination of geological analysis, comparison with authentic Dutch postal stones found on the Cape of Good Hope, and a damning photograph showing one of the two sites free of any "historic" graffiti in 1954 (van Duivenvoorde et Al. 2013). As to the creator(s) motivation, they cite shipwreck-mania throughout the 20th century fueled by 'tales of treasure' among enthusiasts (van Duivenvoorde et Al. 2013).

Fortunately, there is ample evidence to substantiate the authenticity of the English Harbour catchment graffiti. All seven entries with an individual's name, ship, and date investigated in the present study were corroborated by corresponding ships' logs, muster roles, and paybooks, as well as a lieutenant's passing certificate, all housed in the UK National Archives. The earliest located description of the catchment graffiti is from 1844, which assuaged any paranoid catastrophizing early on in the project. Furthermore, an overwhelming collage of stock English names near a well-documented historic site offers little in the way of "tales of treasure" that inspired the aforementioned hoaxes (van Duivenvoorde et Al. 2013). Additionally, nothing on the catchment suggests malicious tampering by tourists or community members.

Ironically, that earliest known reference to the catchment graffiti has a creative embellishment of its own:

"Before entering the dockyard… on the opposite side of the road a large tank, capable of storing 240 tons of water… This tank bears many a sculptured name; among the rest, that of "Nelson," that laurel-crowned hero, who visited the dockyard in 1784" (Lanaghan 1844).

This account by an 1844 documentarian is almost certainly embellished. The catchment's primary function was storing with fresh water to reprovision warships; Retrieving said water was hard work, both from transporting butts from a ship to the catchment and from dragging up multiples of 318 kilograms' worth of water in leather buckets (ADM 51/794). This was a job for the grunts, the ratings serving at the whims of then-Post Captain Horatio Nelson. Nelson despised the station that now bears his name, famously declaring his desire to "hang [him]self at this infernal hole," (Nelson 1784), so it is hard to imagine him compounding his misery with repeated stress injuries and heatstroke, for fun. No 'Nelson' exists on the catchment today, and Nicholson certainly would have reported it if it were visible in 1999, so the carving was either fictitious, or was carved by someone else with the fairly common name and then sensationalized in the 1844 travelers' guide.

A fascinating (and real) example of historic maritime graffiti serving a practical purpose are "postal stones" left by English, Dutch, and Danish sailors in the 17th century. As early as 1601, English crews en route to the Indian Ocean left packets of letters under carved stones to be picked up by crews bound for England (Frescura 2018). Homeward bound crew members regularly performed letter-hunts on shore, scouring the nearby landscape for stones bearing recent dates and names of ships from one's nation (Frescura 2018). Discovered letters from ships of other nations were left alone (Frescura 2018), indicating a mutual respect held to ensure the safe return of one's messages. Like much of the graffiti on Cocos Island, this dead drop system was directed by leadership (Frescura 2018) rather than being an individual pursuit. It also doubled as a method of commemorating ships' stops at the Cape (Frescura

2018), closely resembling headstones in presentation). While the catchment graffiti largely shares this "commemorative aesthetic" (Clarke et Al. 2010), there is no indication that it was carved in service of any kind of postal system. Packets home from the 18th century West Indies were routinely left at royal dockyards or given directly to frequently-encountered homegoing ships (ADM 106/963/168), a luxury not as readily available to 17th century sailors on far-flung voyages to the Indian Ocean. There was no need to leave letters under rocks in English Harbour where they might be destroyed by moisture or lost (Frescura 2018), and none of the entries include the telltale "look for letters" found at the Cape of Good Hope (Frescura 2018). The only practical information the catchment graffiti communicates, by its existence, is that the author was there and alive at the specified date.

More diverse than the English Harbour catchment graffiti are the staggering 854+ inscriptions (Clarke et Al. 2010) carved by nineteenth and twentieth century immigrants interned at the historic North Head Quarantine Station, near Sidney Harbour, Australia. The carvings there vary greatly in language, intricacy, and inclusion of more decorative elements, (Clarke et Al. 2010), contrasting with the catchment graffiti's scarcity of words other than names and its general lack of decorative imagery beyond text stylizations. Clarke et Al. underscore that the Quarantine Station carvings were products of "ruptures in travel", as their authors remained in limbo waiting out suspected contagions (Clarke et Al. 2010). Mirroring their authors' shared situation, the carvings serve as "points of fixture in the transitional state of travel", not unlike how a postcard coveys a snapshot from travelers' more voluntary stops abroad (Clarke et Al. 2010). Many English Harbour catchment graffitists found themselves in a similar position, stuck in an "infernal hole" (Nelson 1784). for as long as three and a half months (ADM 51/995) waiting on repairs to their ships. Graffiti's frequent connection to liminality is found in many historic and modern contexts, discussed in Chapter 2. Anne Clarke and Ursula Frederick and assert that historic graffiti is often both a visual piece and a historical text (Clarke & Frederick 2012). Though perhaps less visually impressive than the sculptured, intricately-framed plaques (Clarke et Al.

2010) found at the Quarantine Station, even the most simplistic catchment graffiti required thought and decision-making regarding its size, orientation, and contents. The present study adopts Frederick and Clarke's perspective, assessing the catchment graffiti as both visual works and as historical texts.

CHAPTER 2: METHODOLOGY

Archaeological

Recording and Cataloging the Graffiti

A Nikon DSLR was used to photograph the catchment walls, and a video walk-by was also performed with a GoPro, which overheated and shut down several times throughout. Two complete circuits' worth of high-quality photographs were taken at two different times of day to ensure that each wall was recorded under optimal lighting conditions. Much of the southwest wall was difficult to record because it has lost large patches of its smooth, top layer, leaving only deepest-cut graffiti that are nearly impossible to discern on the exposed gravel layer. Thankfully, all of the Northeast and Southeast walls, and the vertical portion of the Southwest wall were recorded in sufficient quality to preserve their contents in detail. A measuring tape is regrettably absent in the photos, limiting data regarding size and exact position. The accessible exterior and the floor of the catchment were also photographed, but they show no signs of historical graffiti. Photos were sorted according to their respective photographing session and walls, saved to two separate devices, and logged on a spreadsheet. A list was made of all graffiti visible in each photograph for quick reference.

A catalog was created of all observed graffiti entries. Variables recorded were their contents; the types of contents within (names, dates, ships, etc.); the wall they were observed on; their locations on either the upper, slanted part of a wall, or the lower, vertical portion; whether the entry was relatively intact; the date included in the entry; the presence and type of frame around the entry; any ships mentioned in the entry; and the presence of any non-alphanumeric characters. Entries deemed "intact" were those deemed unlikely to have entire pieces information missing, such as an entry with a proximate eroded patch that might have held the name of a ship, or proximate extraneous, inscrutable lines that may or may not be related. Entries missing only one or a few missing characters were coded as 'intact', despite not being completely legible.

Interpreting the Graffiti

Interpreting 18th century carvings can be tricky. Words and names may be half half-eroded or simply unrecognizable to modern readers; entries often mix print and cursive characters; inscribed years often have five digits; 'J' is often expressed as an 'I', as is 'U' for 'V', and H and M are often nearly identical; and it is not always clear whether two sections of text are related or not. Learning the conventions of the time is essential to accurate reading, as is keeping an open mind to re-interpretation. Several tactics were employed to interpret the graffiti as accurately as possible, and none involved making physical contact with the graffiti or returning to the catchment to collect more data.

A good starting point for discerning unrecognized or partially legible words is invoking common names and motifs. Seemingly half of the names on the catchment start with John or Thomas (an exaggeration) and many end in stock English names like Smith. Ships' names are also a fair guess that can be quickly tested with the extensive, searchable database at *Threedecks.org* (Harrison 2025), which draws its vessel biographies from Rif Winfield's *British Warships in the Age of Sail* (Winfield 2007). Two entries on the catchment include names of localities in England and Scotland, so trying locations in those countries, as well as Ireland, was helpful. Vexingly, many Royal Naval ships mentioned on the catchment share names with places in present-day United Kingdom, such as *Anglesea* (Isle of Anglesey, Wales), *Burford*, *Eltham*, and *Tavistoc*k (all in England); and one place mentioned on the catchment (Bury St. Edmunds, County Suffolk) shared a name with the warship *Suffolk,* which was also sailing the Caribbean at the time. In addition to names, the most common phrase on the catchment is "(Person's Name) belonging to his majesty's ship (*Ship name*)", before or after a date, which can fill in the blanks when characters are missing (see Figure 4.3).

It is also helpful to consider that many sailors likely had imperfect, sometimes phonetic spelling. Writing in 1743, Thomas Smith of HMS *Burford* spelled his ship's name "Byrford", which could mislead readers into reading his entry as "Buyer-ford". This hardly evinces a low level of literacy:

masters' logs regularly include words like "Barbadoes", "Tortugo" and "Dominico" (ADM 51/794), indicative of phonetic spelling.

Extraneous material and unexpected characters can also obfuscate entries. There is surprisingly little overlap between entries on most of the catchment, but it can be problematic when it occurs. The southernmost potion of the southeast wall is chaotic, with entries of different sizes and thicknesses crossing each other in different directions (Figure 2.1). One problematic entry reads "Thomas Boorne Bury Suffolk Aduciel 1742". The person, place, and date are self-evident, but what is an aduciel?

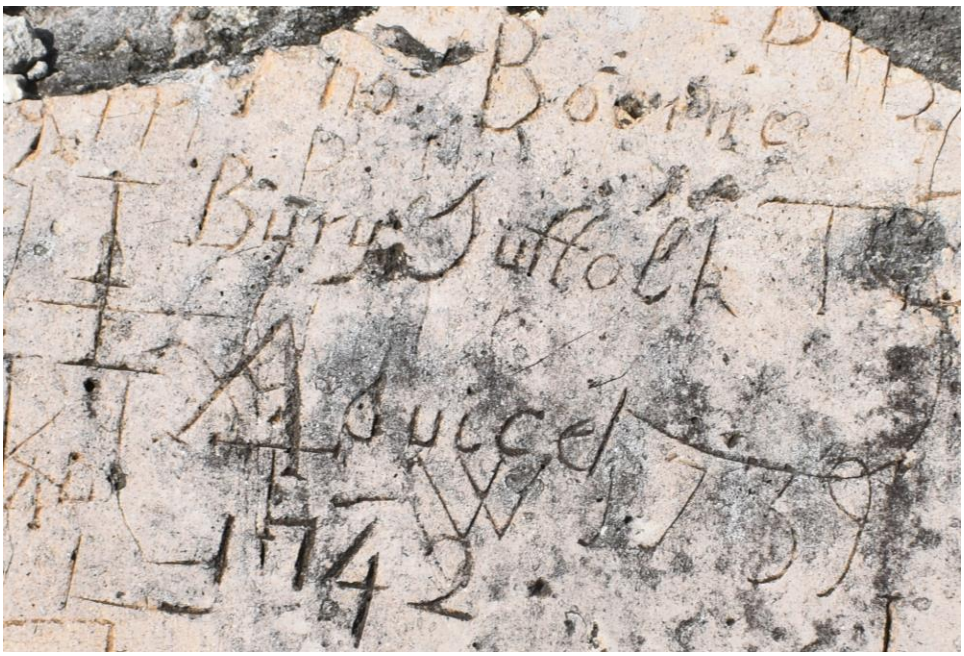


Fig 2.1. Thomas Boorne's 1742 entry. (Photo by author, 2023.)

The 'l' at the end is a far-flung flourish from an entry above and to the right, and the 'u' represents a 'v', so Bourne's entry spells out "Advice"- a reference to the warship *Advice* that visited English Harbour that year (ADM 106/963/168). This combination was enough to throw off accurate interpretation until after archival sources had been collected, so Thomas Boorne is not among the identified sailors discussed in Chapter 5. Determining continuity between sections of text was also an occasional challenge. There were several instances of two proximate entries sharing some similarities, but could often be delineated based on differences in handwriting, carving depth, character size, stylization, or

content (e.g., two different names, or the same year carved twice, both indicative of two separate authors).

Least expected of all were years with five digits (Figure 2.2). These are "double dates", a product of England clinging to the antiquated Julian calendar's "old style", which commenced the new year on March 25th (Connecticut State Library 2025). The first ninety calendar days effectively occurred in two different years at once, depending on whether someone was in England or in mainland Europe, which had long since adopted the "new style" January 1st of the Gregorian calendar (Connecticut State Library 2025). At least until England made the switch on January 1st 1752, many English people were accustomed to clarifying the year with the "double-date" (Connecticut State Library 2025). These regularly appear in ships' logbooks from the time (ADM 52/339), and at least two sailors followed the convention when carving graffiti between January 1st and March 24th in 1743 and 1748, respectively.

Fig 2.2. Entries employing a double-date. *Top,* 17423; *Bottom,* 17478. (Photos by author, 2023.) Or they were visitors from the 175th century, in which case this thesis may be promptly discarded.

These challenges impose an appreciable learning curve on 21st-century readers, and the resulting interpretations remain highly subjective and would inevitably vary between observers. For this reason, the interpretation phase lasted nearly until the project's completion, with entries' catalog data being regularly updated with these new determinations and discoveries.

Post-Processing

There are a few post-processing tricks to employ when entries are not easily discernible in photographs. The most basic is tracing. Simply following suspected elements with a bright line in Microsoft Paint helped separate characters from the noise. Drawing boxes around each overlapping entry, or at least outlining their orientation and direction of writing, can sometimes be enough to make sense of a cluttered mess.

GIMP and other photo editors offer other possibilities. Increasing contrast makes an image's dark sections darker, emphasizing the catchment's scratches and other blemishes, but quickly bleaches the light sections. Subsequently lowering the images' brightness does nothing to the dark sections but dims the rest back to a legible state, resulting in a version of the photo where previously faint markings and blemishes on the wall are much more pronounced. This was done with more precision using GIMP's 'Color Curves' editor: Toggling the 'value' option allows users to lighten and darken specific areas of an image based on their original lightness (i.e., blackening the "dark grey" areas without blackening the "light grey" areas, etc.). Another tactic of occasional benefit was inverting images' colors, rendering carvings and blemishes light on a dark background. Studies have yielded conflicting results on whether this actually improves visual acuity (Sethi & Ziat 2022; Erickson et Al 2019), so this may just be an idiosyncratic brain-trick. Simply altering the image's exposure and black point was often enough to differentiate carvings from surrounding noise (Figure 2.3).

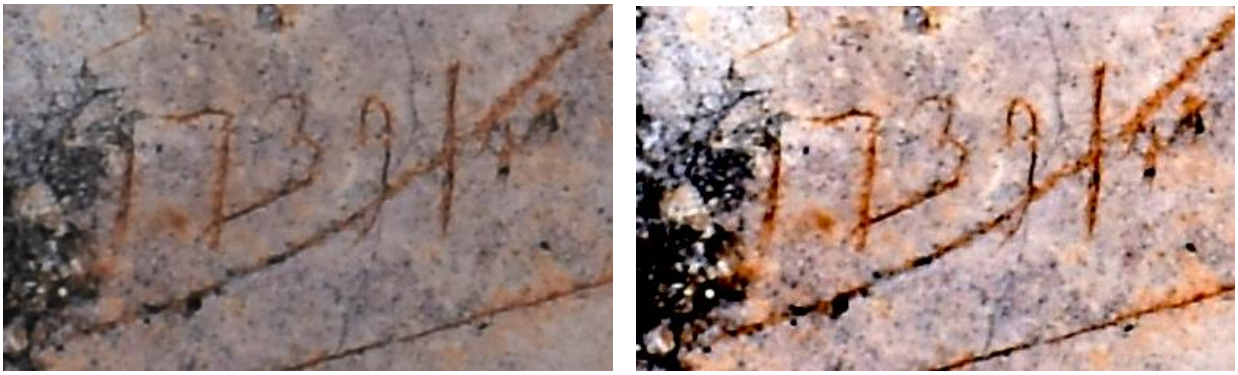


Fig 2.3. *Left,* base image; *Right,* image with exposure increased by 1.279 stops and black level increased by 0.045, making the small '40' more visible. (Photos by author, 2023.)

Historical

Primary historical documents were selected according to information provided in the graffiti. Of immediate interest were the graffitists themselves, and a select few left behind sufficient information to be located in archival sources. In addition to their full names and date of visit, each of these sailors had also inscribed the name of the ship they presently served on. Without that key detail, it would be impossible to discern which of the many "John Smith(s)" visiting English Harbour in a given year had made the graffiti, or to know which ships' muster to search for their personal details. There are no recorded instances of sailors writing their ship's name, but not the date or their full names. If a date had eroded or been omitted, it may have still been possible to identify them by determining which iteration of the ship had visited English Harbour at the right time, (e.g. *Burford* (1722-1752), not *Burford* (1699-1719) that wrecked before the catchment was built (Winfield 2007). Of course, a date would be needed to determine which of the several "John Smith"s on board was the most likely culprit. Likewise: absent a name, or with just initials, there would simply be to many applicable people on a ship of 200-400 to be certain.

Information on each of these sailors was sought in their ship's muster and paybook. Muster roles stated each sailor's name, when and where they joined and left the ship, the circumstances of their departure (discharged [~~D~~], "discharged and dead" [~~DD~~], or run [~~R~~]), their role or rating aboard the ship,

any promotions they might have received, and sometimes listed their cause of death or the name of the ship they were discharged onto, if applicable (ADM 36/92). Paybooks contained much of the same information and were originally sought for redundancy's sake. This was beneficial in the case of the aforementioned Thomas Smith of *Burford*: *Burford's* muster role had been heavily waterlogged (ADM 36/432), quite possibly when the ship was nearly sunk in the battle of La Guara in 1743 (ADM 56/309; ADM 51/4133), and entries not at the center of its pages had been lost (ADM 36/432). Fortunately, the paybook was intact, and Thomas Smith was located inside- a credit to the adage "two is one, one is none." Paybooks proved singularly useful later in the project, specifying if sailors sent their wages to family/dependents in England until their return (ADM 33/367).

Potential accounts of the graffitists' experiences were sought in their respective ships' logbooks. These specified where the ship was on a given date, major events of each day, and other information like the day of the week and weather conditions. These confirmed exactly when ships were in English Harbour, how long they stayed, how many times they visited over a given voyage, and the extent of repairs. Critically, they state when sailors were sent to the catchment for water and how many days it took to complete the job. Other useful details appear on occasion, such as the size of *Roebuck*'s longboat and the equipment on board, and the quantities of water brought drawn, described in Chapter 1. Pairing two ships' logbooks can reveal moments like sailors from both ships encountering each other at watering places (ADM 52/339; ADM 33/367).

Naval correspondence filled gaps in the research. The UK National Archives website includes summaries or transcriptions of many relevant documents, such as letters from a captain in English Harbour reporting on the catchment's construction (ADM 106/854/1). The subject lines typically state when and where the author was writing, which was enough to confirm early on in the project that ships in the graffiti had been in English Harbour when the graffiti suggested they were. These document

synopses freed up valuable time at the archives to focus on copying the aforementioned musters, paybooks, and logbooks.

Five days were spent at the UK National Archives- arriving at opening, leaving just before closing, and having lunch on the floor just outside the large documents room. Over 2000 iPhone photographs were taken of relevant sections (Figure 2.4) to be analyzed back in the United States. Pages were photographed in order, sorted into folders, backed up every evening onto a separate device, and automatically added to cloud storage.

Fig 2.4. One book containing multiple ships' musters over several years, dollar bill for Americans' sense of scale. Fortunately, only a portion of this needed to be photographed. (Photo by author, 2024.)

High praise goes to the amazing and friendly National Archives staff for their efficiency, especially those who hauled all these heavy tomes to and from the pick-up counter. Muster or paybook information was obtained for all seven sailors. Logbooks for five of their six ships (two were from the same ship) were recorded; the graffiti of HMS *Swan* was discovered *during* the archives visit, and only its muster was available on such short notice. Otherwise, all data sought was obtained, marking a spring break well-spent.

The digitized documents were analyzed at home over several months. Like the graffiti, they impose a learning curve on current-day readers. The logbooks are written in calligraphy, by today's standards, and each has their idiosyncrasies (Figure 2.5): *Anglesea's* has lots of obfuscating flourishes (ADM 52-339), *Eltham's* is written faintly enough to evince a 3-year ink shortage (ADM 51-309), and *Burford*'s notates days of the week with astronomical symbols (ADM 52/356).

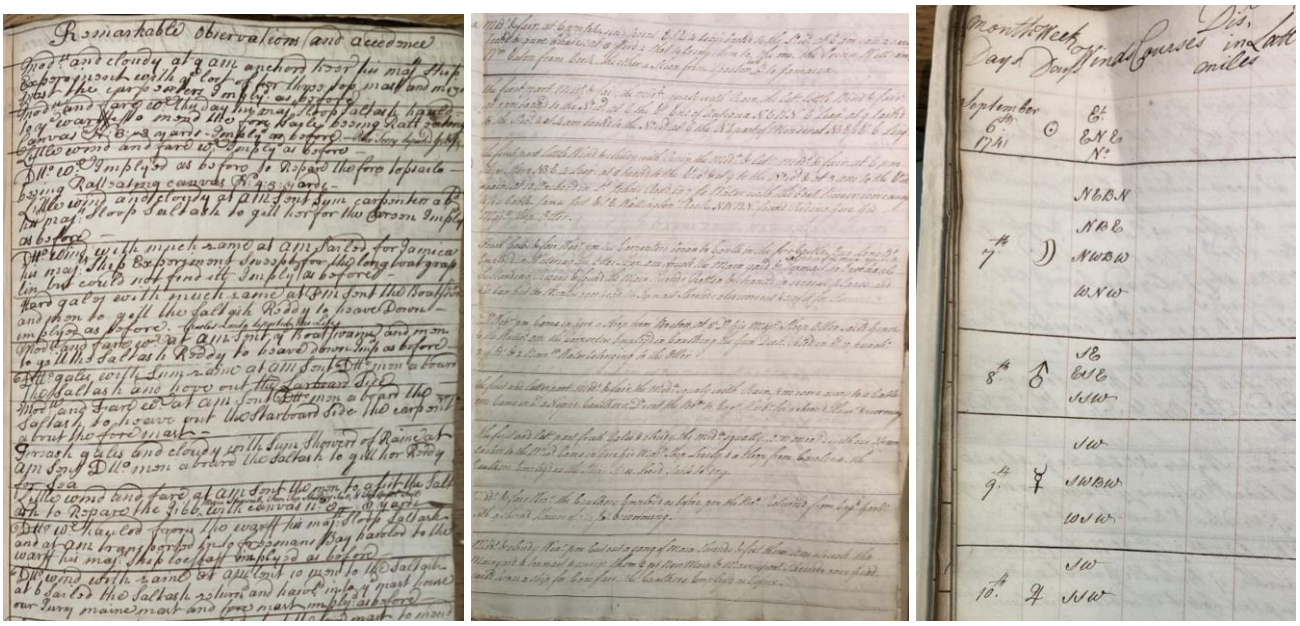


Fig 2.5. Ships' logbooks. *Left,* Anglesea (ADM 52-339); *Center,* Eltham (ADM 51-309)*, Right,* Burford (ADM 52/356).

One quirk of ships' musters is that a sailor might have two or more entries in a given roll. These reflect a change in position during the voyage, such as John Hacklet, graffitist of HMS *Tavistock,* appearing as a captain's servant, then as an able rating, and finally as the ship's clerk (ADM 36-4195). Musters also employ a variety of abbreviations that can quickly stump current-day readers (Figure 2.6). Hacklet was promoted to clerk on April 26, 1752, noted below his name in a web of cursive abbreviations. The 'ab' to the farthest right (traced in red/brown) denotes an able rating (Rodger 1986:348-351); it is scratched out by a horizontal zig-zag (traced in black), denoting its end. What remains spells 'Clk' (traced in purple/blue), denoting a clerk (Rodger 1986:348-351).

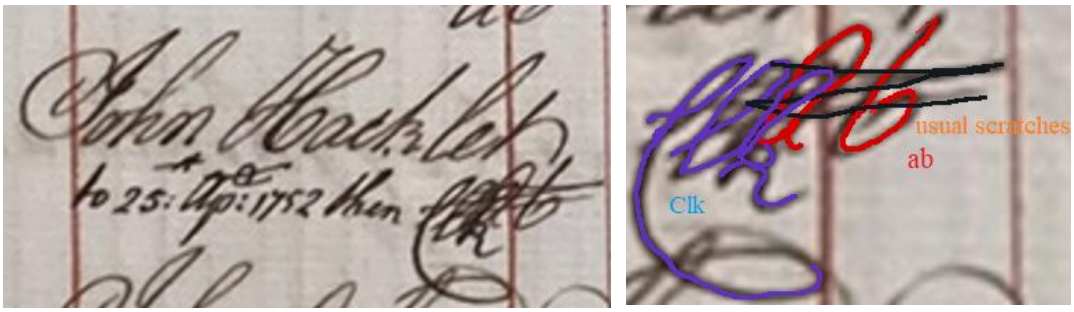


Fig 2.6. *Left,* John Hacklet's Muster Entry (ADM 36-4195); *Right,* tracing to separate the '*Clk*', '*ab*', and the nullifying *scratch-out*.

Surprisingly, only once was a researched name shared by two different sailors on the same ship. There were two people named Thomas Smith aboard *Burford* when one of them carved their graffiti (ADM 33-392). The ship's paybook differentiates them with a parenthetical (1) and (2) (Figure 2.7), and suggests the culprit:

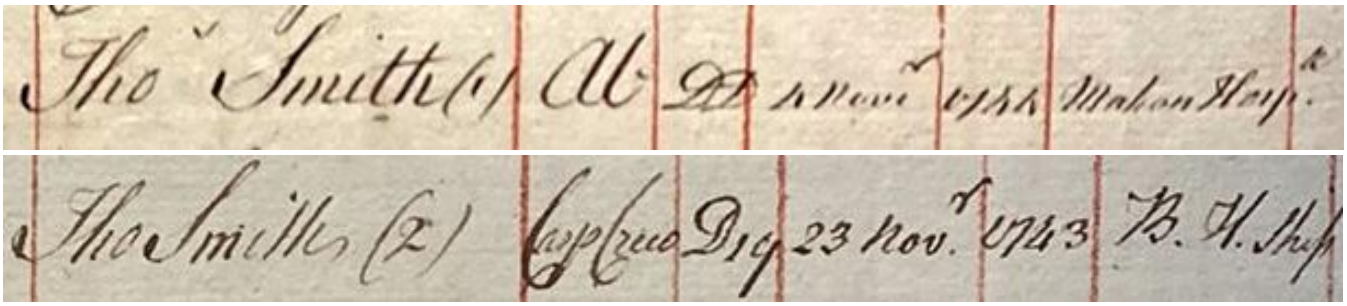


Fig 2.7. The Thomas Smiths' paybook entries (ADM 33-392).

Thomas Smith #1 was an able rating (ADM 33-392), as were the other six investigated graffitists (see Chapter 4); Thomas Smith #2 was part of the carpenter's crew (ADM 33-392; Abbreviation from (Rodger 1986:350). *Burford's* log reports that the carpenters were occupied for nearly the entire visit to English Harbour with extensive repairs to the ship's hull and masts, including on days that men were sent to the catchment to fill water (ADM 51-4133). It would have made little sense to send out someone who could be repairing the ship when there were over two hundred sailors on hand (ADM 33-392) who lacked such specialized training. It is more likely that Thomas Smith #1, the able rating (ADM 33-392), carved the graffiti. Fortunately, this was the only *whodunit* during the identification process. It certainly could have been worse: *Burford* had four Johnathan Smith's aboard, and five Thomas Taylor's (ADM

33-392). These sorts of conclusions are only possible when logbooks and sailors' information are paired together.

Musters and paybooks state where sailors joined and exited the ship's company, but rarely do they indicate where they had been before, or where they went next. Continuity only occurs when the muster indicates that they had been discharged from or onto another naval vessel, in which case their story could be feasibly followed by locating that ship's muster and logbook. This occurs with two of the graffitists (See Chapter 4), but, due to time and logistical constraints, their stories are not pursued further in this manner.

CHAPTER 3: GRAFFITI ANALYSIS

Qualitative

General Contents

Immediately apparent to current-day observers is how similar the carvings are in contents. All but a select few are bare-bones combinations of sailors' names or initials, dates, and, occasionally, ships or hometowns (discussed further in Quantitative Analysis). There are no drawings of seabirds, anchors, phalluses, or any other doodles that one with current-day sensibilities might expect of young sailors. That nearly 200 artists over half a century independently followed this relatively strict template suggests that an informal "style guide" had developed on the catchment. It is within this style guide that many sailors poured immense creativity and individuality, making works of art out of their names. Carvings vary in size, orientation, line depth and width, cursive versus print, capitals and lowercase, the way their letters are shaped, and additional symbols unique to specific artists. Some took on elaborate, time-consuming projects, while many others were content with writing just their initials or names with single cuts.

The carvings are generally easy to differentiate because of how infrequently they overlap each other. There are clear instances of authors changing the orientation or direction of their carving once they encountered another. One writes out "Rob^{t} Lyon aboard His Majesty's Ship Eltham" in a continuous line until it runs up against someone else's initials, at which point they finished their entry by writing "1741" underneath the word "Eltham" (See Figure 4.9 in Chapter 4). There is substantial crowding at the bottom of the catchment, but, even in this case, there is little overlap (Figure 3.1). Some come within millimeters of other carvings, cross the boxes framing them, and even occupy the negative spaces within larger letters (e.g., Nat Russell squeezing the end of his name the between lines of JB, or JB writing his 'J' around the end of Russell's name). They seldom plow through other carvings, and even less so to the point of obfuscating their contents.

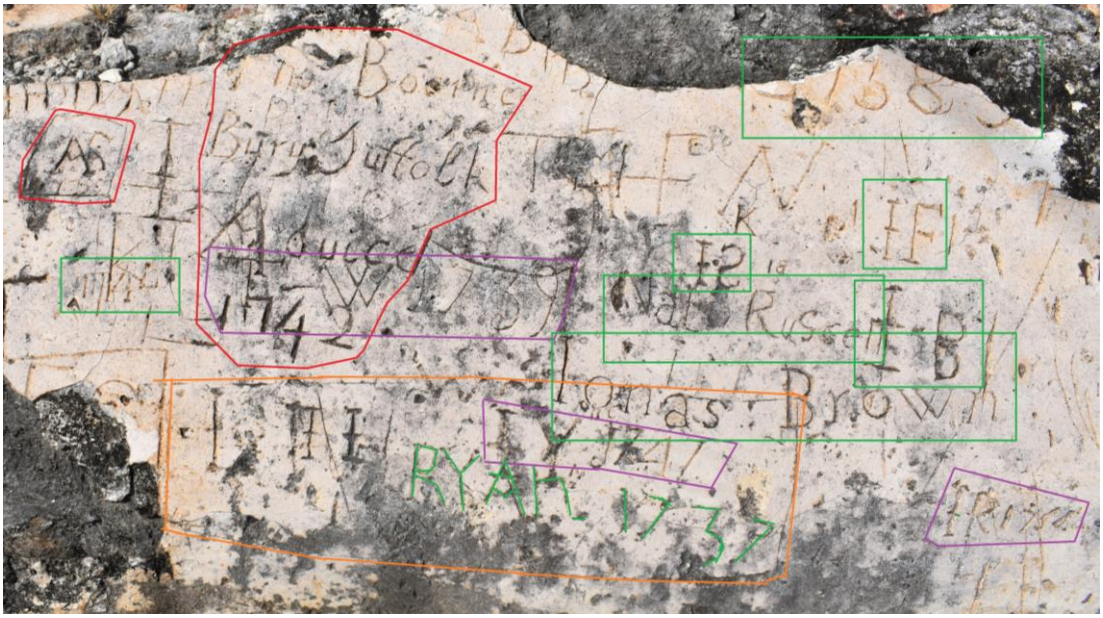


Figure 3.1: The most crowded point on the catchment. Some entries boxed in post for easier viewing. The aforementioned frames enclosing many carvings also make clear what information belonged to which author. Robert Lyon circled the "1741" he had added underneath the main text of his carving, which keeps it from getting lost, despite the break in continuity. The sailors clearly planned the location, size, and orientation of their carvings to keep them distinct and legible. This behavior also suggests a level of respect for their predecessors' work, discussed in Chapter 5.

Surnames on the catchment are all commonly found in England, Scotland, and Ireland, including "Brand", "Gibbins", "Gray", "Macnamara", "Miller" "Russell", "Smith", and "Webb". Given names found on the catchment are all those traditionally given to male children, such as Andrew, John, Nathaniel, Robert, and Thomas; there appear to have been no outwardly female graffitists at the catchment. The mentioned ships were all British Royal Navy vessels, and the two locations mentioned are located in the present-day United Kingdom.

Characters

Entries are comprised of many stylized letters (Figure 3.2) and symbols (Figure 3.3). There is a healthy spread of both cursive and print characters, and the small verity of symbols add artistic punctuation to entries.

Fig 3.2. Alphabet of observed letter formations, capitals are followed by lower cases. Red/Brown: I and U. Purple/Blue: J, S, and V. (Photos by author, 2023.)

Context is often needed to differentiate capital I and J, as both appear crossed, uncrossed, and dotted. Lower case ‘j’ typically curves left, while ‘i’ sometimes curves right. ‘U’ also frequently represents ‘V’. Capital A and H often feature troughed bridges, making H and M frequently appear similar. W is often written as two overlapping V’s. ‘Long S’s (ſ), are often used in words with ‘ss’, such as “Sucseſs” or “Sheerneſs” (ADM 52/339); The above example is from “Anglesea”, deviating from convention. The backward *Soviet S* appears to be a stylistic choice, and the figure-eight s is rather vexing. The letters Q and X do not appear (X is used frequently as a spacing or decorative motif, discussed later). Fifteen of the 42 different letter-characters found on the catchment have at least two significantly differing versions. The diverse lines, fonts, and flourishes demonstrate that carved graffiti was subject to the same the idiosyncrasies of handwriting on paper.

Non-alphanumeric motifs on the catchment (Figure 3.3) include diamonds, one doubled and another dotted; X's, pluses, and a cross with dots in each corner; several colons, a 4-dotted colon, a trio of dots, and a single large dot.

Fig 3.3. Non-alphanumeric symbols found on the catchment, all located between phrases. (Photos by author, 2023.)

All of these symbols decorate and space out entries, consistently occurring between two names, initials, or words. Unlike Cocos Island (Raupp et al. 2018) and the North Head Quarantine Station (Clarke et al. 2010), there is no maritime iconography to be found. The occasional plus could be reasonably interpreted a Christian cross, particular the one with dotted corners and serifs at each point, but there is no way to be certain. The motifs employed are simple to create, requiring only straight cuts and a few twists of the knife. This suggests that sailors either felt little compulsion to craft more involved pieces, or had limited time to carve and focused on their names instead. That no one attempted a more elaborate motif in the forty-five-year span suggests general adherence to the established convention of writing only names, dates, and occasionally ships or hometowns—much like a guestbook. It seems

likely that at least some of the graffitists only added their names because they were inspired by their predecessors' entries to join in the tradition. They would have looked to other entries for inspiration and guidance and may have emulated them to better integrate their work with those of their predecessors.

Hearts

At least three heart shapes were carved onto the catchment in the 1750s, apparently by at least three different graffitists (Figure 3.4). Two border a pair of initials and date, while the other is carved between two single initials. The only question worth asking is whether or not these were romantic gestures, and there are merits to both cases. The greatest problem with this interpretation is that there is no certain indication of there being two subjects in any of the three carvings. They each have two initials, but not two *pairs* of initials, as many- but not all- sailors represented themselves with.

Fig 3.4. Hearts on the catchment. *Left, "*W◊S 1750" (in a heart); *Center, "*T♡D 1753"; *Right,* "FB 1758" (in a heart). (Photos by author, 2023.)

The *Left* and *Right* carvings could have employed the heart simply as a decorative frame; the *Center* carving could have it as a way to separate one person's two initials, like Nathaniel Russell did to his names with a diamond, as the *Left* might have also done. There are also no obvious declarations of love found elsewhere, and we might expect to see at least a few women's names appear if these were the initials of a female sweetheart back home. Playing cards with the four suits we see today were the norm

in Europe by the late 15th century (Kemp 2012:98), and only cost a shilling a pack by 1720 (Hargrave:1966:282) —well within the budget of 18th-century tars (National Archives of the UK:2017; ADM 33-367). Graffitists writing in the 1750s would have encountered hearts in the same non-romantic context as the diamonds found on the catchment, casting further doubt on their romantic significance.

It seems hard to believe that a design so ubiquitous today could have carried the same romantic meaning over two centuries ago, but it almost certainly did when the sailors carved these entries. Present in Christian religious artwork since at least the 15th century (Kemp 2012:104), the classic "heart shape" has long been associated with devotion and the soul (Kemp 2012:103). Its secularization occurred in tandem with that of Saint Valentine's day, which had become popularly recognized as a day for professions of romantic love by the late 15th century (Kemp 2012:107), despite having little to do with the eponymous Christian martyr (Kemp 2012:107). The symbol's romantic significance was so well established by the late 18th century that there survive heart-adorned Valentine's Day cards commercially printed in 1791 (Kemp 2012:109). The heart would have already been recognized as a romantic symbol for such a product to be sold to the general public. That, and the centuries-long connection to relevant themes (Kemp 2012:103-4), make it difficult to believe that normal people living only 40 years prior were *not* aware of the heart's romantic significance. The authors' choice to use it becomes rather conspicuous, considering that they could have framed their carvings in a neat rectangle or quick circle to match the rest of the graffiti, and adorned them with diamonds or any other symbol *not* associated with romance.

The same critical eye as before can support these being romantic gestures. *Left*'s initials being separated could indicate them to be two people's first initials; this goes especially for *Center,* which has its heart between the initials. The latter also appears, albeit subjectively, to have been made by two authors, with the first initial being drawn much bolder and more ornately than the second- like romantic partners do to this day. There are instances elsewhere on the catchment where authors drew and framed

a single initial, so these could very well be the marks of two pairs of people. *Right* has no such separation, making it seem more likely to be a single person. It would also make sense for professions of love to have been kept anonymous. A sailor might not want to place a female sweetheart's name on a wall covered almost entirely of those of their blistered, stinking comrades, though this is purely speculative. What's not speculative is that romantic or, at least, sexual relationships between men were very much illegal at the time. Legally punishable only by death ("without mercy") since 1661 (Charles II:1661), dozens of sailors received that sentence between 1690 and 1840 (McMurray 2023). Alternatives to this extreme punishment were often used, and many officers overlooked these arrangements (McMurray 2023), reminiscent of "Don't ask, don't tell". There was clearly an expectation to not publicize same-sex relationships, so it would make sense for two romantically involved sailors to stick to first initials when making their graffiti, if they made it at all. There is ultimately no way to know one whether or not these were romantic gestures between sailors or to someone else back home, but it remains a strong possibility.

Quantitative Analysis

. The cataloged graffiti was coded into different variables and run through descriptive statistics in SPSS. The two most informative analyses are the graffiti's contents and dates of creation. Contents Observed elements among the graffiti are persons' names, initials, dates, ships' names, and locations in the United Kingdom (Table 3.1).

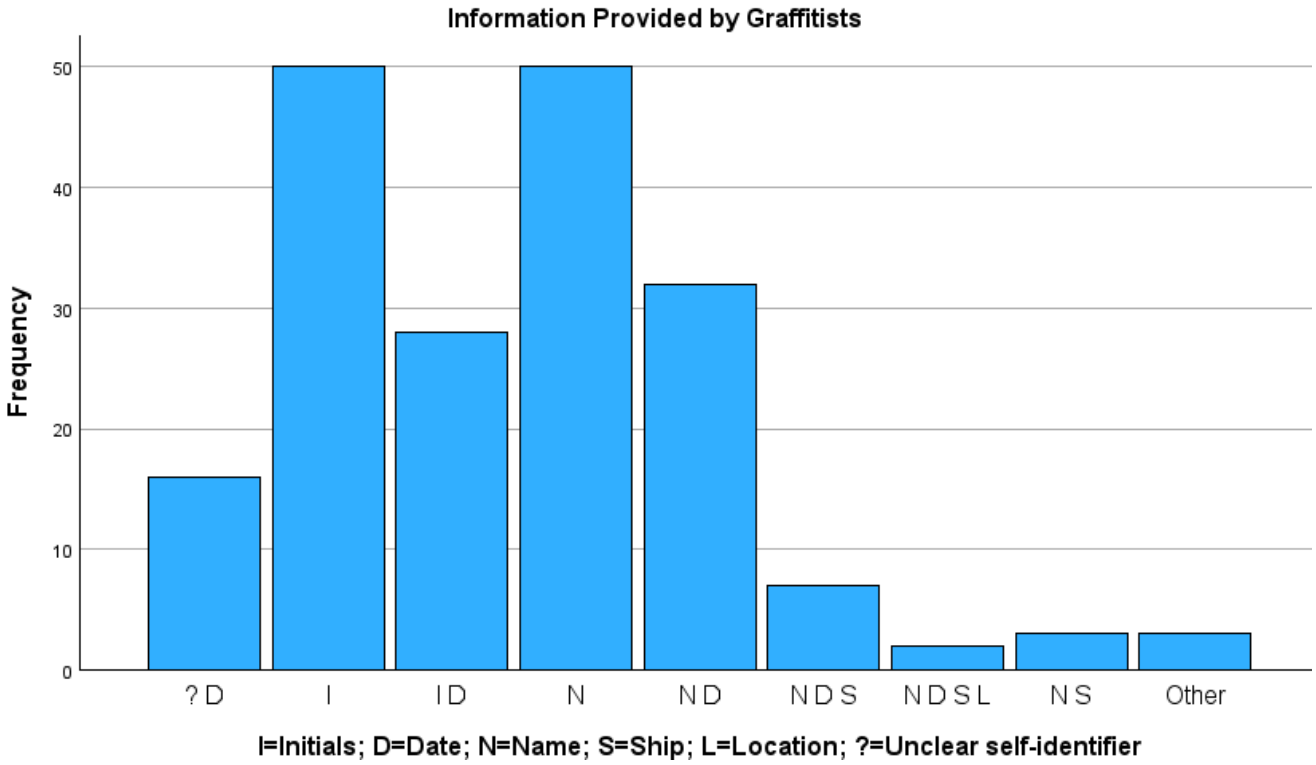


Table 3.1. Information provided by catchment graffitists. (Graph by author, 2025.)

172 of the 191 entries (90.1%) feature either one or more initials or a written-out name. 18 of the 191 (9.4%) were too eroded to determine a self-identifier, and the one remaining entry (0.5%) was an isolated profanity. Of the 172 entries with self-identifiers, 78 (45.3%) signed with their initials, while 94 (54.7%) wrote out at least their surname. Of the initial writers, only 28 of the 78 (35.9%) included a date, while the rest (64.1%) included no further information. Of the 94 authors signing their full their names, 44 (46.8%) added more information: 32 of the 94 (34%) wrote name and date; 7 (7.4%) wrote name, date, and ship; 3 (3.2%) wrote name and ship, and 2 (2.1%) wrote name, date, ship, and a place in the United Kingdom- presumably their hometown.

It is unclear how this data might be skewed by erosion. One way would be to examine only the entries that can be confidently deemed ‘intact’. This label was given to entries that showed no physical evidence that entire pieces of information could be missing, such as a proximate eroded patch that might have held the name of a ship, or extraneous, inscrutable lines that may or may not be related to

an entry. Entries missing only one or a few missing characters were coded as ‘intact’, since there was evidently no chance of a missing date, etc. Problems scuttle this approach: Only 100 of the 191 could be coded this way, effectively halving the data to consider, which reduces confidence in the results. More importantly, shorter entries degrade differently than more elaborated ones. Small initial pairs are more easily lost when a single patch chips off the wall, but they are less likely to have once held additional information and so might be underrepresented in the dataset entirely. Conversely, elaborated entries have more components to lose, and so would appear in the dataset as “not intact” at a disproportionately higher rate. This is supported by comparing “intact” trends to those of the full dataset: Initial-writing increases from 45.3.% to 58.6%, and name-writing decreases from 54.7% to 41.4%- a significant 13% offset. There is simply too much uncertainty to artificially compensate for erosion in one direction or another, and so the recorded graffiti is treated as representative of the original assemblage.

The data indicates the order of priority among the graffitists. 172 (90%) are confirmed to have stated who they were, though that figure was likely once closer to 190 (99.5%) before nearly three centuries of erosion. 85 (44.5%) stated when they were there; twelve (6.3%) professed their connection to their ship; and two (1%) connected themselves to a place in England. Unsurprisingly, those signing just their initials were less interested or less able to include further information than those who signed their full name.

160 of the 172 (93%) entries with self-identifiers include neither a ship nor a place, indicating that the vast majority of sailors were unable or unwilling to write more. This can be taken four ways: For one, many of them would have had a limited grasp of writing, given that an estimated one in three sailors from 1700 to 1750 could not even write their names (Rediker 1987:158). Some writing just their initials may not have been able to spell out their full names, and those writing their names might not have practiced anything beyond their signature. Similarly, chiseling stone requires a different kind of

penmanship than ink or charcoal, which might have limited the scope and complexity of some sailors' responses. Another factor would have been time allotted. As described in Chapter 1, the sailors were at the catchment to get water, not carve graffiti. Since only a few people could haul water at a time, a sailor arriving with six casks and twelve companions had less work to do than a sailor sent out with twelve casks and six companions. One party might have had a break after the work was done, while another might have hustled the water straight back to the ship, tearing poor Percival Abbotskerwell away from a hastily scratched 'P.A.'.

A third factor is the influence of other carvings at the catchment. As described in Chapter 2, sailors carving graffiti at the catchment were participating in a tradition spanning fifty years. Much as they were inspired by their predecessors to carve their own graffiti, they would have been inspired to emulate their predecessors to better associate themselves with them, and so there exist no slogans, poems, drawings of ships, or hot gossip on the catchment. A fourth factor limiting responses would have been varying levels of interest, which would account for sailors that were eager to participate in the tradition but did not enjoy stone carving, and the sailors who chose to carve masterpieces in the hot sun on their water break.

It is striking that ships' names outnumber sailors' hometowns twelve-to-two on the catchment. Ten entries demonstrate that authors were clearly capable of writing whatever they wanted but chose to record their current place of work and residence instead of their place of origin. The other two wrote their hometown but made sure to also commemorate their ships. Though collectively representing only 6.3% of the total dataset, they suggest that the catchment was not a place for homesick confessions, instead emphasizing at least some sailors' greater commitment to their current life in the navy than whatever they may have left behind back home.

Sailors seldom provided enough information for future visitors to identify them individually, least of all those who signed only initials. For any of the factors above, many of them were content or

forced to remain anonymous to future visitors. This makes evident that perfect historical posterity was not at the forefront of their minds, nor was letting friends on other ships know they had been there. Instead, the information most sailors included was enough to commemorate their adventure to the other side of the world, and to participate in a tradition connecting them to their fellow sailors past.

Dates

76 of the 85 entries featuring dates explicitly show, or are conservatively interpreted (see Chapter 3) to, an exact year (Table 3.2). The earliest is from 1737; the last is from 1786.

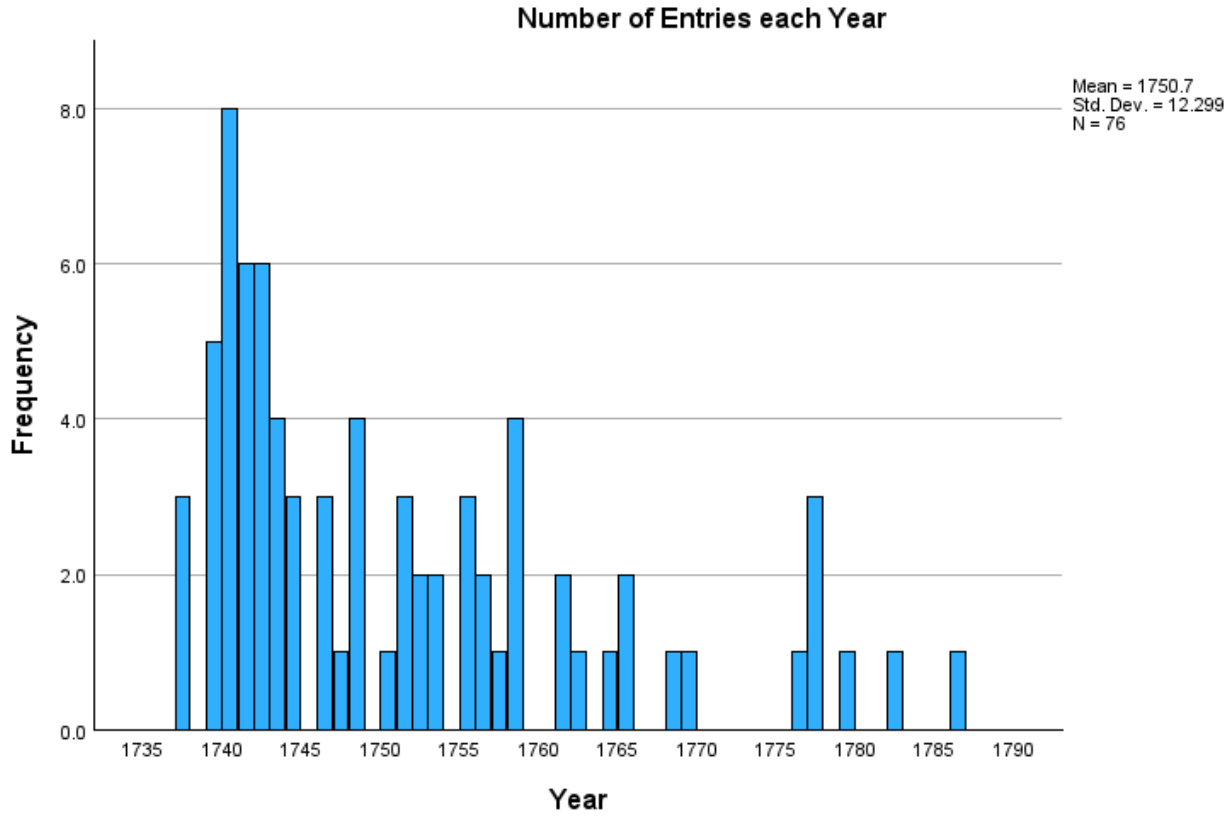


Table 3.2. Number of dated entries each year. (Graph by author, 2025.)

The earliest three of the 76 dated entries are from 1737 (3.9%), and are the only entries dated between the catchment's completion in 1734 and the outbreak of the War of Jenkins' Ear in 1739. It cannot be said whether 1737 was when the first carving appeared, since there remain 115 entries without dates. The greatest concentration of dated entries is the 32 between 1739 and 1744, accounting

for 42.1% of all dated entries on the catchment, and averaging 5.34 dated entries each year. Entries remain fairly consistent from 1745 through 1758, averaging 1.86 per year (26 total), and then slow down to a 0.86 yearly average from 1759 to 1765 (6 total). A nadir occurs from 1766 until 1775, during which time only two dated entries were made, or 0.2 per year. A weak resurgence of six entries appears from 1776 to 1782 (0.85 per year). and then one final outlier occurs in 1786. Assuming that the 76 dated entries are representative of when all 191 recorded entries were carved on the catchment: 8 entries were carved before 1739; 80 entries were carved from 1739 to 1744; 65 were carved between 1745 and 1758; 15 were carved between 1759 and 1765; 5 were carved from 1766-1775; 15 were carved from 1776-1783; and 3 were carved after 1783.

The graffiti roughly correlates with wartime dockyard usage. The Caribbean theater of the War of Jenkins' Ear (1739-1744) (Wier 2013), saw several English fleet actions against Spanish settlements in South America, Central America, and Florida (Richmond 1920:242-260). Several ships referenced on the catchment were involved in attacks against Portobelo in 1739 (ADM 52/339), Cartagena in 1741(ADM 51/309), and La Guaira and Porto Cabello in 1743 (ADM 51/309; ADM 51/4133), and the greatest concentration of entries are dated from this period. Tensions with the French escalated over the following years. One ship mentioned in the graffiti was sent to ensure the evacuation of French and English subjects from the islands of St. Vincent's, Dominica, and St. Lucia 1751 (ADM 51/995) per the treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle declaring them neutral islands at the close of the War of Austrian Succession (Boromé 1967:30-32). The French stalled these evacuations for years until the two nations were at war once again (Boromé 1967:32), at which point The West Indies Squadron was doubled in size (HB1:PAGE). English Harbour repaired ships involved in attacks on French colonies and privateers until the war's end in 1763 (Harris 2015). The graffiti persists over that decade and a half, and then falls off sharply after the conclusion of the Seven Years' War. Dockyard traffic declined significantly during peacetime. Its facilities fell into neglect for over a decade (Harris 2015) and there are only two

dated entries from the ten-year span from 1766 to 1775. The American Revolution brought naval attention back to the West Indies, which boosted dockyard traffic until 1783 (Harris 2015). This period encompasses the final collection of dated graffiti, save for one entry from 1786. The available data indicates that the catchment graffiti fluctuated with dockyard traffic: It persisted after the initial boom of entries in the War of Jenkins' Ear, fell off after the Seven Years' War, and returned weakly in the American Revolution.

An improvement in dockyard efficiency may explain the general decline in graffiti between these periods. There are significantly more entries from the War of Jenkins' Ear (1739-1744) than from the Seven Years' War (1756-1763), and only the smallest resurgence came of the American Revolution (1776-1783, for these purposes), despite English Harbour's similar role in all three conflicts. Improvements were made to the dockyard between 1755 and 1778, including the construction of multiple storehouses, a saw pit, joiner's loft and boathouse, capstan house, two mast houses, the beginnings of a canvas and clothing store, as well as the reclamation of the dockyard's careening wharf (Antigua and Barbuda 2014:76-77). All of these would have improved the dockyard's efficiency at repairing and resupplying warships, reducing the time sailors spent in English Harbour, and therefore limiting opportunities to carve graffiti. No exact study of the duration of ships' stays in English Harbour was found during this project, but it stands to reason that better infrastructure would result in a smoother process.

Technological advancement may have finally put an end to the catchment graffiti. Drawing water by hand was incredibly time-consuming, as described in Chapter 1. Similar water cisterns in England were being fitted for horse-drawn "engines" to improve efficiency as early as 1747 (ADM 106/1084/89; ADM 106/1110/247). There is no physical or historical evidence of any such apparatus at the English Harbour catchment, indicating that water still had to be slowly drawn by bucket or manual pump throughout the 18th century. A solution to this problem appeared in 1770, when Scottish surgeon

Dr. Charles Irving presented to the admiralty a simple apparatus in which a pot of seawater was boiled and its vapors condensed and drained into a vessel as fresh water (Watson 1787:172). By 1771 this process was being employed on British Royal Navy vessels at a scale large enough to offset the demands of entire crews (ADM 106/1199/218). Though it hardly became ubiquitous overnight (ADM 106/1207/164), the ability for ships to produce their own fresh water could only have meant an eventual end of their reliance on inefficient, antiquated cisterns. Even the simplest of such desalinization devices gave ships more flexibility in when and where they watered, which may have made the difference between a tedious top-up at English Harbour and simply waiting until their return to the fleet anchorage at Carlisle Bay, Barbados (Harris 2015), where there was an abundant natural spring (Ward 2011).

Rather than sailors giving up on graffiti or being arbitrarily banned from making it, the available evidence indicates that the graffiti dried up when there were no more opportunities to create it. It flourished when greater numbers of ships spent longer lengths of time in English Harbour during the War of Jenkins' Ear, and less so through the Seven Years' War; and it withered as ships spent less time in English Harbour and became less dependent on the catchment, and eventually stopped sending would-be graffitists to collect water.

Frames

56 of the 191 entries (29.3%) are self-contained with a frame. There are 47 rectangular boxes with four sides and sharp corners, five were free-form, amorphous enclosures or deliberate ovals, two were underlined, and two were encased in heart shapes. Of the 82 entries legible to the decade-level, only 30 have frames, leaving too few cases to confidently measure usage over time, which would determine if the frames were a direct response to crowding.

CHAPTER 4: THE GRAFFITISTS

Seven different entries specifying a sailor's full name, the date of their visit, and the name of their ship were identified in time for a March 2024 visit to the National Archives of the UK in London. Using their carvings, information about each of them and their experiences were located in their respective ships' logbooks, pay books, and muster roles. Less information was gathered on some sailors than others due to time constraints, but the documents obtained tell a great deal about their careers, experiences in the Caribbean, and the contexts in which they carved their graffiti.

John Home- Roebuck

John Home served on HMS *Roebuck* from 1736 September to 1740 May (ADM 33/367), (Figure 4.1). Home joined the ship as an able rating in English Harbour (ADM 33/367), making him the only sailor investigated to not have joined his referenced ship in England. He may have discharged straight from HMS *Lowestoff*, which was also in English Harbour at the time ADM 51/794). He was promoted to midshipman in January 1739, a position commanding a higher salary and greater respect from his peers (Rodger 1986:24), He held this rating until his discharge onto HMS *Portland* at Carlisle Bay, Barbados in May 1740 ((ADM 33/367).

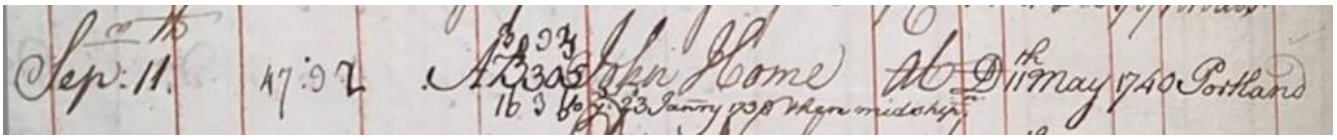


Fig 4.1. John Home's paybook entry (ADM 33-367).

Roebuck suffered no catastrophes from battle, sickness, or misadventure, but Home's voyage was hardly uneventful. In 1737 September the ship was thrashed in a hurricane off Montserrat and had to limp 9to English Harbour with a sprung mainmast (ADM 51/794) and critically damaged sails and rigging ADM 51/794). There it was discovered that storm or seawater had gotten into the food stores, so over 390 pounds of bread and 4 gallons of oatmeal were unceremoniously dumped into the harbor (ADM 51/794). The following year *Roebuck's* longboat capsized in a swell while fetching water at St.

Lucia (ADM 51/794). No one was hurt, but this misfortune resulted in an itemized list of everything that sunk, providing a good idea of what catchment graffitists would have packed in on watering trips in English Harbour. Most relevant is the leather bucket used to manually draw up water (ADM 51/794), and the list specifies the longboat to have been 26 feet in length (ADM 51/794), providing the starting point for how many men would have been sent on watering trips, as described in Chapter 1. In April 1739, a violent quarrel broke out between two of Home's fellow crew members, resulting in the death of one and confinement of the other (ADM 51/794). No court martial is recorded (ADM 51/794), so it is possible that the second party was let off without trial.

The costliest battle of *Roebuck's* voyage took place two months later at Carlisle Bay. In the harbor, two brigs got under sail and brazenly attempted to run down the barge lying next to *Roebuck* (ADM 51/794). Together they raised pennants and began firing their guns "in defiance" (ADM 51/794) of the laid up warship before them, ignoring *Roebuck*'s warning shots (ADM 51/794). *Roebuck* armed the barge and sent men in pursuit, but the brigs escaped (ADM 51/794), and one of *Roebuck*'s men was killed in the process (ADM 51/794). The ships in question were Liverpool slavers (Slave Voyages 2025) *Swallow* and *Foster*, captained by John Hughes and Thomas Williamson (ADM 51/794). Perhaps this event reminded the crew who the greatest scum of their day were.

On August 14th that year, Home and his comrades were read orders "for committing all sorts of hostilities against the Spanyards" (ADM 51/794), kicking off the War of Jenkins' Ear. Momentous as that might sound, the remainder of *Roebuck's* voyage was business as usual: sailing the Leeward Islands, stopping and interrogating merchant vessels, never encountering any Spanish ships of war (ADM 51/794). *Roebuck* sailed for England in June of 1740 (ADM 51/794), but John Home had other plans. Opting to stay where the action was, Home secured a discharge onto HMS *Portland* (ADM 51/794), which stayed in the Caribbean for another three years (Winfield 2007). None of *Portland*'s logbook, muster, or paybook were obtained during the archival trip, so little more can be said with

certainty. The logbook of HMS *Eltham* reports in 1742 June joining *Portland* and another ship to catch a Spanish vessel bound for Havana, (ADM 52/393), but, without *Portland*'s muster or paybook, there is no guarantee that Home was still on board (or alive at all) by that time. Still, from what *Roebuck*'s muster and paybook permit, John Home's tenure was about as amenable and rewarding as one could hope for.

John Home's Graffiti

John Home is the only graffitist to record the span of time he was aboard his ship (Figure 4.2): having joined in 1736 (ADM 33/367), and presumed to depart in early 1740. What's noteworthy is that he carved the later date predictively, inscribing when he assumed to part ways with *Roebuck*, rather than writing this in retrospect while serving on another ship. This is evident from the second date being slightly off: In selecting 1739/40, he clearly expected to be elsewhere before March 25, 1740 (while the year was still written as "1739/40" (Connecticut State Library 2025), but his discharge onto *Portland* took place in May of 1740 (ADM 33/367), when the year would have been written as just "1740". Home likely would have written the correct "1736 to 1740" if he were writing in post, and he might also have mentioned the ship he was currently in English Harbour with. *Roebuck*'s logbook confirms that sailors were sent for water in late January 1740 (ADM 51/794) matching Home's second date, and that stop was his last in English Harbour before leaving the ship's company (ADM 51/794; ADM 33/367). Home's graffiti makes clear that he knew his time aboard *Roebuck* was coming to an end.

Fig 4.2. “John: Home (R)oebuck (f)rom 1736 to 1739/40” (see Chapter 2 for closer look at the latter date). (Photo by author, 2023). As a midshipman, he likely could have taken his time on this while his junior crewmates hoisted the water.

Rather than pay off in England with the rest of the crew (ADM 33/367), Home and three other sailors joined HMS *Portland* to continue sailing the Caribbean (ADM 33/367). Their motivation was almost certainly economic. Desperate to fill its undermanned warships for the conflict with Spain, the English government renewed its offer of a signing bounty of two months’ pay to those entering naval ships in January 1740 (Richmond 1920:267)—just before Home left his farewell carving. As a recently promoted midshipman (ADM 33/367) already in the West Indies, Home was offered a sizable bonus to stick around doing what he was already doing. It made more sense to sign onto a ship recently arrived in the West Indies and pocket the bounty than to accompany *Roebuck* back to England, wait around unemployed in Liverpool or Portsmouth, and then sail straight back to the West Indies where he started. That logic would explain what he was doing in English Harbour when he first joined *Roebuck:* Staying in the Caribbean, where the work was. By Home’s time, sailors in foreign waters were legally entitled to have their wages sent home to family or an attorney at regular intervals (Rodger 1986:131). The paybook indicates that Home and several unrelated colleagues sent their wages home to a “Richard Kee, Asr^{e}” (ADM 33-367) (possibly an abbreviation of “esquire”), indicating Kee to be one such agent. Home’s wages going to the same place as his colleagues from England (ADM 33-367) indicates that he was, at least, from the British Isles, and not from a Caribbean colony. Paying an attorney’s fee (Rodger 1986:131) to have a regular income sent home instead of collecting it in full on his return suggests that

he was providing for a dependent or family member (Rodger 1986:131), and sought to continue doing so as long as he could.

This plan was likely on Home's mind when he encountered the catchment graffiti. His contribution reads as a goodbye, a commemoration of a successful voyage and possibly a positive chapter in his life. Since he first joined *Roebuck* in English Harbour (ADM 33-367), it is fitting that he chose to commemorate it there. There is no direct indication of what relationships he formed aboard. The three other sailors who joined *Portland* did so on different days (ADM 33-367), casting doubt on whether they really went "together", or were merely acquaintances. We can at least assume he had made friends over three and a half years traveling, sleeping, and working in close quarters with the same people. He clearly found his time aboard *Roebuck* worthy of commemoration, but had too much going for him to follow it back to England. *Portland*'s muster role and log were not obtained for this study, so John Home's story ends here.

A second entry mentions *Roebuck,* but the author's identity is unclear (Figure 4.3).

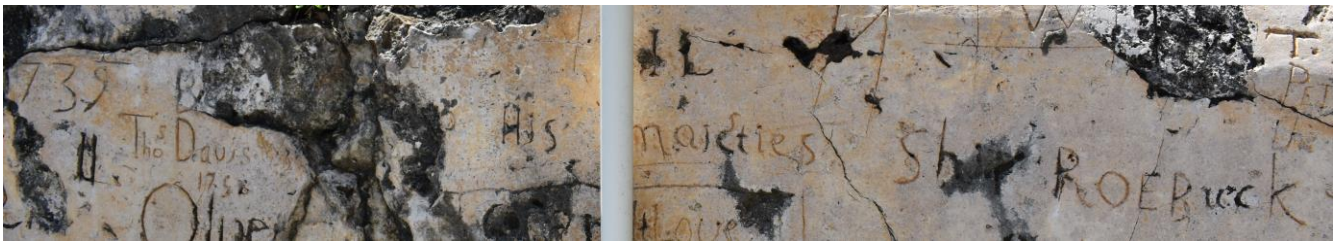


Fig 4.3. "Feb… 1739…Be[longing t]o His majesties ship ROEBuck". "Feb" is just out of frame. (Photo by author, 2023.)

The surface to the left of the carving is in poor shape, so it could have once contained relevant text like a name. There is a "John X B…" to the right of the carving, but it is written considerably larger and spaced farther than the rest of the text, making its relevance questionable. The rest of the surname is also missing, precluding a confident search through Roebuck's paybook. Whoever the author was, there are ample stylistic differences to John Home's to suggest that this was the work of a different person. This carving has no frame, while Home's is entirely boxed; the cuts here are much deeper and

wider than Home's; this author wrote out "Belonging to His Majesties ship" between their name and ship, while Home employed a simple colon; the ship is written as "ROEBuck", while Home only capitalizes the 'R'; the capital 'H' here is bridged with a 'V' shape while Home's is bridged with a more modern straight line; and Home's lower case 'k' curls back on itself like a capital 'R', while the one here does not. The two are placed on the same wall in similar elongated orientation, suggesting that they were made in tandem, or one inspired the other's shape. The surface around this entry's date is too eroded to confidently say if the "Fe… 1739" was once "February (number)1739", or if the material above the '9' could be a slashed '40', placing it near the time Home carved his graffiti.

Nathaniel ◊ Russell & John Webb- Anglesea

Two more graffitists (Figure 4.4) arrived in the Caribbean in April 1738 (ADM 52/339) aboard the 40-gun warship (Winfield 2007:166) *Anglesea.* Able ratings John Webb and Nathaniel Russel spent their short tenure in the West Indies sailing up and down the Leeward Islands, hunting Spanish merchantmen sailing to and from the Spanish Main (ADM 52/339). Their only noteworthy encounter was with a ship carrying Spanish prisoners exchanged after Edward Vernon's sacking of Porto Bello in November, 1739 (ADM 52/339). *Anglesea* arrived at Porto Bello after the battle, and over ten days crew members were sent ashore to help tear down the port's fortifications (ADM 52/339). Russell and Webb enjoyed the conquering heroes' reward of fresh beef when the fleet regrouped in Port Royal, Jamaica (ADM 52/339), despite not actually fighting. The rest of their cruise was relatively uneventful, and *Anglesea* sailed for England in June of 1741 (ADM 52/339). Nathaniel Russell was discharged onto HMS *Sandwich* in London on August 13. He had also been sending his wages to England (ADM 36/92), suggesting he might have been providing for family back home. John Webb was still aboard *Anglesea* as of July 28, 1740 (ADM 36/92), but further information on him was missed in the haste of copying archival documents. Barring the occasional accidental death and the inevitable losses to disease

(ADM 52/339; ADM 36/92), the pair's trip to the West Indies went smoothly by comparison to other graffitists examined.

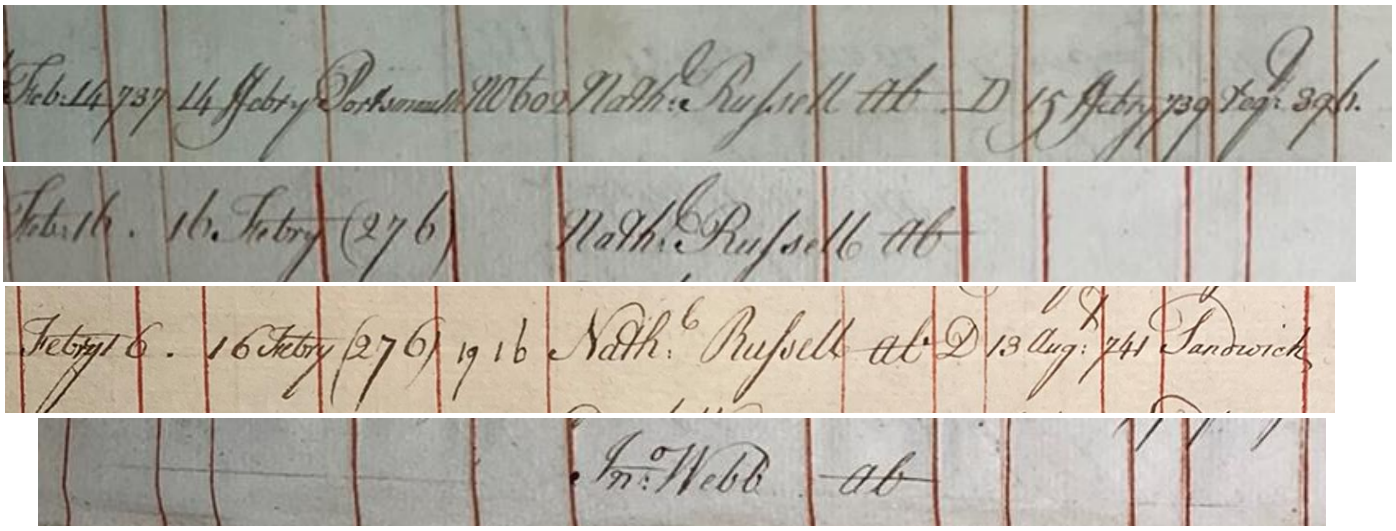


Fig 4.4. *Top two lines,* Nathaniel Russell's July 1740 muster entries (ADM 36/92); *Third line,* part of Nathaniel Russell's September 1741 paybook entry (ADM 33/361); *Fourth line*, John Webb's July 1740 muster entry, his dates were included the entries above his in the muster book (ADM 36/92).

Nathaniel Russell's Graffiti

Where his peers had largely left one entry apiece, Nathaniel Russel etched no less than six neat, deep carvings (Figure 4.5), some counting among the largest on the catchment, earning him the coveted title of 'Most prolific Georgian Era graffitist'.

Fig 4.5. Nathaniel Russell's six known carvings. (*a*) "Nat ◊ A..."; (*b*) "Nathaniel Russell ◊ Anglese[a]…"; (*c*) "Nat ◊ Russell"; (*d*) "NAT ◊ R[ussell]…"; (*e*) "[N]AT… Russel[l] Anglesea may 28 1740"; (*f*) "[N]at… R[u]ssell…". (Photos by author, 2023.)

His carvings bear remarkably similar contents, all being combinations of his name (6/6), a diamond (5/6), and his ship (3/6, possibly in two more partially eroded entries). He includes the superscript "^{L}" in at least two of the five entries that have with his name shortened, suggesting that he was using the common abbreviation rather than stating a preferred nickname. His trademark diamond was clearly integral to how he styled himself. Its placement at different points between carvings suggests that it was purely ornamental and not something required to separate the same ideas each time. He styles his 'R' in three different ways, and both 'g' and 'A' in two ways each, indicating that he had read enough to develop a wider stylistic vocabulary than if he had carved in the same way each time. All six carvings are neat and legible, and of sufficient line depth to maintain their longevity. The sheer quantity and small variations indicate that Russell enjoyed the graffiti as a creative exercise and enjoyed the process of writing.

Russell was kind enough to carve out the exact date he went to the water catchment, and the logbook confirms that it was the same day a watering trip took place (ADM 52/339). *Anglesea's* brief stay from May 25 to June 1, 1740 consisted of a quick careening and six consecutive days of watering, and they left as soon as watering was complete (ADM 52/339). Russell might have gone on the watering trip on the 28th and then returned on the following days to carve more graffiti. Russell had been in English Harbour before in 1738 (ADM 52/339), but the lack of dates from that time suggests that May-June of 1740 encompassed his first encounter at the catchment. It is also worth noting that he had been in the Caribbean for two years by this point, and would remain there for another year (ADM 52/339). *Anglesea* made a much longer stop in English Harbour later that year from July 6 to November 18 that included watering trips, so Russell had plenty of time to perfect his craft.

John Webb's Graffiti

John Webb's carving is neat, large, and deeply cut (Figure 4.6). His 'J' features an intersection resembling a bow tie; the two halves of his 'W' overlap; and the bridge across his 'A' resembles a 'v'. He appears to have added another word/phrase beginning with "Dow", but it has mostly eroded. There are enough differences from Russell's dated carving (Figure 4.5*e*) nearby to discredit the possibility of Russell writing for him. Webb spells his ship as 'Anglsea' without an 'e'; makes heavy use of serifs; and uses an open, rectangular '4' instead of Russell's closed, triangular formulation. While Russell was in the habit of changing character stylizations, Webb's entry is sufficiently distinct from all six of Russell's to discount his friend ghost-writing for him.

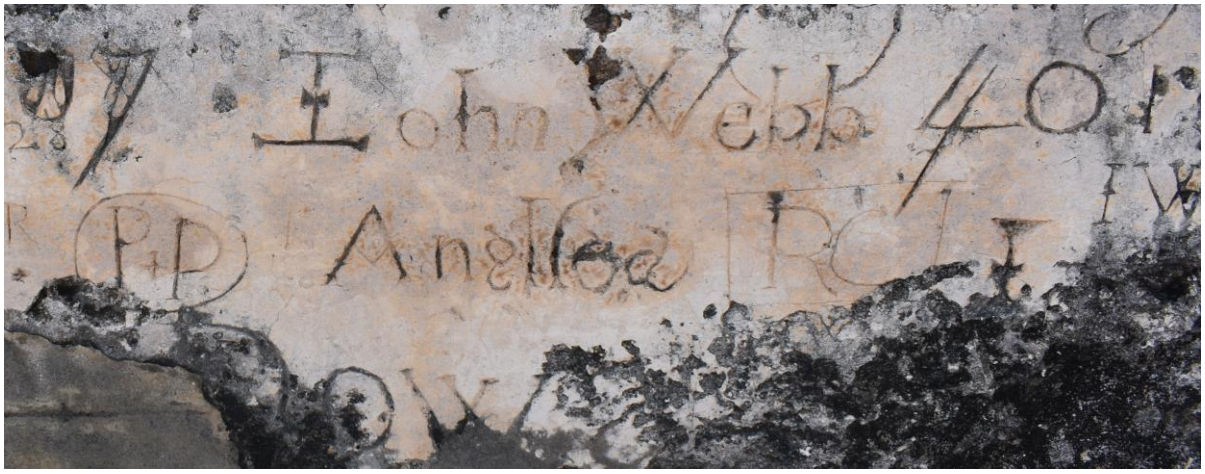


Fig 4.6. “07 John Webb 401 Anglsea Dow...”. (Photo by author, 2023.)

The numbers are most likely a date, given the precedent set by other entries, but it is difficult to interpret. The ‘401’ reads like a double-dated “1740/1”, which does appear without a slash in contemporary ships’ logs (ADM 52/339). *Anglesea* sent its longboat from Saint Johns to English Harbour a few times for supplies between January and late March of 1741, and on each occasion it returned with filled casks of water, but they were never there on a day ending in 7. The later number might stand for “1740”, just placed next to extraneous material. In that case the 7 could mean July, September (Written often as “7ber” (ADM 52/339)), or the 7th day of any month. Or the whole thing might simply be a “1740” with a unique first character. It is anyone’s guess if Webb made his carving before, after, or concurrently with Russells’. Its close proximity, comparable size, and similar orientation as Russell’s dated carving suggests that one influenced the other in some way, and that the two crewmates were eager to keep theirs together on a wall covered in the names of strangers.

Robert Lyon- Eltham

Some of *Anglesea*’s crew were sent on two final watering trips in St Johns, Antigua. At the watering place, they met sailors from the 40-gun (Winfield 2007:168) ship *Eltham*, freshly arrived from England (ADM 52/339; ADM 51/309). Among those swapping stories may have been able rating

Robert Lyon (ADM 36/1029; Figure 4.7), a future catchment graffitist. As one crew sailed for home, the other settled in for a much bloodier tenure in the War of Jenkins' Ear.

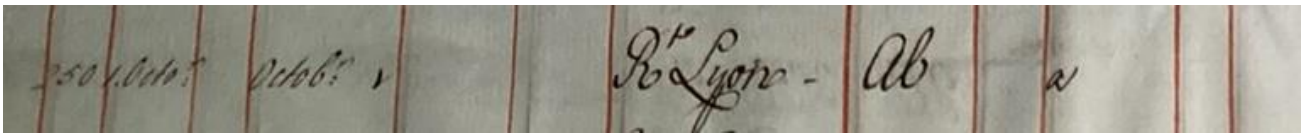


Fig 4.7. Robert Lyon's muster entry through 1743 (ADM 36/1029).

Robert Lyon's initial battles aboard *Eltham* were fairly low-stakes. The first was a probing attack on the Spanish town of Cumaná (in Venezuela) in September 1741 (ADM 51/309). Accompanied by the privateer *Bonetta*, *Eltham's* crew scouted the defenses and determined the deepest approach for future invasions (ADM 51/309). Eltham sustained minor damage from trading potshots with the defenders, and one of the crew had their arm and "most of his left side" shot off, which only killed him after two agonizing days (ADM 51/309). The crew awoke the next morning to discover a reported 1000 soldiers and countryfolk firmly entrenched on the beach, eager to make their acquaintance (ADM 51/309). With no chance at landing, let alone burning Spanish ships, leadership elected to withdraw (ADM 51/309). Foiled, *Eltham* went elsewhere, and its crew found marginally more success as mail-thieves. On Christmas Eve that year, they chased down a Spanish polacca carrying packets from Cadiz to Veracruz (ADM 51/309). The Spanish crew pitched all their correspondence into the ocean before they were boarded, and Eltham's men only managed to recover some before it sank (ADM 51/309). And that was how Robert Lyon and his friends stole Christmas.

A much more serious encounter occurred on the following April Fools' Day. In company with HMS *Lively*, *Eltham* engaged a trio of Spanish warships guarding a merchant vessel off Puerto Rico (ADM 51-309). According to Eltham's completely unbiased master's log, the Spanish ships pulled the underhanded tactic of luring the English into close range, and then, at once, quickly raised their colors and commenced fire (ADM 51-309). The merchantman made a break for Puerto Rico, *Eltham* fell upon the larger two warships (60 and 36 guns), and *Lively* engaged the third (ADM 51-309). They fought at

point-blank until nightfall, and resumed the next morning (ADM 51-309). The arrival of two privateers from Puerto Rico (ADM 51-309), undoubtedly summoned by the merchant ship, ended the battle. In imminent danger of being disabled and boarded, the English cut their losses (ADM 51-309). Said losses aboard *Eltham* included extensive damage to the ship, three men killed in the battle, and four more perishing from their wounds (ADM 51/309). Injuries included a fractured skull (died the following day), a shattered thigh (died two days later, possibly from amputation), two men each losing a leg (one died a month after, probably from infection), a fractured jaw, and several others only "slightly" wounded (ADM 51/309). Immediately after the battle, two more crew members tried to desert by swimming away from the ship at St. Kitts, and one drowned before they could be recovered (ADM 51/309).

By late February 1743, the crew were recovered and ready for more disappointment. The Leeward Islands Squadron assembled off of the fortified Spanish town of La Guaira (also in Venezuela) for an invasion (ADM 51/309). Leadership were eager for a victory to rival Admiral Vernon's famed sacking of Portobelo in 1739, after which Portobello Road in London and the Portobello District in Edinburgh are named (Simms 2007:276). Falling in behind the flagship *Burford*, Lyon and his comrades hoped for the best (Figure 4.8).

Fig 4.8. The Battle of La Guaira (Archivo General de Indias 1743).

Nothing in London is named “La Guaira”. The squadron exchanged fire with the defenders, *Eltham* focusing on the town’s 12-gun battery (ADM 51/309). Five hours in, the crew’s attention was ripped from the Spanish to a much deadlier threat: their protective flagship had been cut adrift, and was on course to ram *Eltham* and HMS *Norwich* (ADM 51/309). The well-seasoned crews of both ships skillfully evaded the shivering behemoth and continued to fight for another three hours (ADM 51/309). Afterward, the fleet sent its longboats to make landfall and set fire to the Spanish vessels, but to no avail (ADM 51/309). The fleet withdrew (ADM 51/309), leaving the Spanish to rebuild.

Retreating to Curaçao to repair and convalesce, the fleet was put to half rum ration (ADM 51/309). Perhaps this was due to the significant destruction of the ships’ provisions (ADM 51/309), or it might have been an attempt to curb problem-drinking in the wake of the battle. After all, 21 potential friends aboard *Eltham* were killed in the battle or died of their wounds (ADM 51/309) (the ship’s possibly alcoholic (ADM 106/945/47) surgeon soon perished as well, cause unspecified), 48 more were wounded, and the logbook conspicuously gives up on itemizing injuries at this point (ADM 51/309). A third reason was that another assault was imminent. After just two and a half weeks’ rest and repairs,

Eltham and the rest of the fleet staggered out of their moorings and set a course for the fortified Spanish town of Porto Cabello (ADM 51/309).

Nothing in London is named "Porto Cabello". On April 16th, *Eltham* and three other ships sailed against the fortified town, covered by bomb vessels (ADM 51/309). *Eltham* fired on the castle and landed 45 soldiers and 50 sailors, but to no effect (ADM 51/309). The fleet pulled back, returning a few days later for another destructive stalemate (ADM 51/309). Only five of *Eltham*'s men were killed (ADM 51/309), but the accumulated damage to the ship had become impossible to ignore. *Eltham*, *Burford*, and several others retreated to English Harbour (ADM 51/309), and *Eltham* sailed home after three weeks' repair (ADM 51/309). Robert Lyon was paid off in England on October 26, 1743 (ADM 33/377). Having not arranged a regular remittance to someone back home, he collected his entire wages at the end of the voyage (ADM 33/377), suggesting that he had no familial obligation or dependents. *Eltham*'s paybook and muster offer no clues as to where he went next. After a voyage like his, Lyon might have collected his pay and taken a winnowing oar with him.

Robert Lyon's Graffiti

Lyon's graffiti is dated 1741 (Figure 4.9), narrowing the time he carved to one of *Eltham*'s two visits that year. Their July 20-August 18th visit is most likely, during which the crew made twelve watering trips (ADM 51/309). That visit followed the routine discussed in Chapter 1 of clearing and heeling the ship, and then filling casks while scraping, caulking, and paying the ship's sides (ADM 51/309. Lyon could have been on any number of the twelve watering trips, giving him plenty of time to carve his entry. The alternative is that he carved during the only watering trip (ADM 51/309) of their February 1742 visit, but this requires Lyon to have omitted a double-date.

Fig 4.9. "Rob^{t} Lyon aBord His mjs… [misspelling of "Majesty's"] Shi[p] Eltham 1741". (Photo by author, 2023).

He includes his name, date, and ship, and has no obviously associated entries nearby. He abbreviates his first name in the typical fashion of "Rob^{t}" (ADM 33/377); His initials are both drawn at large enough scale to encompass their subsequent letter; and the middle rung of *Eltham*'s 'E' is formed with a triangle instead of a line. He frames his name and date, but not his ship, suggesting the former to be the priority. The date is written beneath an otherwise horizontal line of text, indicating that he ran up against the boxed 'AF" initials to the right, and sought to avoid overlap. He might have done this out of respect for the existing entry, or simply to preserve the clarity of his own entry. His circling the date evinces the latter, keeping it from being lost among other entries. The carving's inconsistent framing, and the shallow, shakily written, misspelled "aBoard His mjs… ship" suggest that he might have been in a hurry to finish after writing his name and ship.

Thomas Smith – Burford

A contemporary sailor-graffitist found even worse luck on their voyage Able rating Thomas Smith (FIGURE 4.10) joined the aforementioned 70-gun ship *Burford* in London, sailing to the West Indies in November-December 1742 (ADM 51-4133). Whereas many sailors encountered diseases once they reached the West Indies (Rodger 1986:98), Smith found himself in the midst of an epidemic before *Burford* had even left England. Nine of his colleagues perished while still in England, five more died in the month-long passage, and seven more followed not long after their arrival (ADM 33-392; ADM 51-4133). Thirteen were sent to a hospital St. Johns, Antigua shortly before the Battle of La Guaira,

totaling 34 crew lost before encountering any Spanish cannon (ADM 33-392; ADM 51-4133). Though there is no specified cause of the 21 deaths, disease it was the most rapacious killer of Georgian sailors (Rodger 1986:98-99). Musters and paybooks typically list when sailors were killed in battle (ADM 33-392; ADM 36-1029), and logbooks report accidents like drownings and falls (ADM 51-4133; ADM 51-309)– both of which are absent in this instance. The latter instead reports regular intake of supplies for sick men, and the aforementioned discharges in Saint John's, Antigua (ADM 51-4133) , which all but certify the cause. 25 men were pressed into service in Carlisle Bay (ADM 51-4133), no doubt to offset these losses.

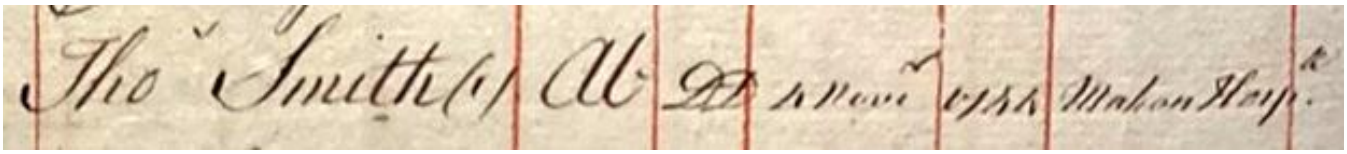


Figure 4.10: Thomas Smith's Paybook Entry (ADM 33-392).

Thomas Smith was present for many of the same events as Robert Lyon (ADM 51-4133). Their closest encounter was undoubtedly when Smith's ship nearly rammed Lyon's at La Guaira (ADM 51-309; see Lyon's section) (Curiously, this event is reported *Eltham's* logbook, but is conspicuously absent from *Burford's.* It would be helpful to examine the log of HMS *Norwich,* the other ship nearly rammed in *Eltham's* account (ADM 51-309)). Since *Burford* was largest target and sailed at the very front of the formation (ADM 51-4133; ADM 51-309), Smith endured absolute carnage. In five hours, his ship had received 73 shot-holes, its mast shot in three places, its sails shredded, and a 24-pound iron ball cut straight into a storeroom where the ship's doctor and mate were tending to the wounded, killing both (ADM 51-4133). Equally horrific was when the ship's commander, Franklyn Lushington, had his leg ripped off by chain-shot (ADM 51-4133; Royal Museums Greenwich 2025). *Burford*'s crew was left constantly patching leaks and pumping water out of the hold, requiring additional 30 men from

HMS *Otter* to save the ship (ADM 51-4133). 25 of the ship's company died in the battle, 78 more were wounded, and more likely perished shortly afterward (ADM 51-4133).

The fleet retreated to Curacao, where Captain Lushington died of his wounds in the governor's residence (ADM 51-4133). Many sailors were shuffled between ships to account for various losses to injury and disease (ADM 51-4133); at least one of *Burford*'s is reported to have actually *deserted* onto *Eltham* (ADM 33-392), possibly to stay with friends who had been officially discharged onto it (ADM 51-4133). Seventeen more crew members melted away into the town after the battle (ADM 33-392), clearly uninterested in the imminent sequel. Unharmed and undeterred, Thomas Smith stuck it out for Porto Cabello in April (ADM 33-392), potentially being one of the 105 *Burford* sailors briefly landed to attack the fortifications on foot (ADM 51-4133). As with La Guaira, the invasion came to nothing, and the fleet retreated again (ADM 51-4133).

Thomas Smith's Graffiti

After Porto Cabello, *Burford* underwent repairs in English Harbour from May 25 to June 18, 1743, (ADM 51-4133). It was heeled, its sides scrubbed, re-caulked, and paid; its entire mainmast and some other mast sections were replaced; it was resupplied, and some of its men were sent to the Tank Bay catchment to retrieve water on June 13th and 14th (ADM 51-4133). Thomas Smith was present for at least one of those trips, who was in English Harbour for the first time on that voyage (ADM 51-4133; ADM 33-392) and, presumably, in his life. Smith's carving (FIGURE 4.11) is more utilitarian than some others discussed. Narrow, deep cuts form small but well-preserved print characters spelling out his name, the year, and his ship. 'Byrford' appears to have been spelled phonetically. His straightforward style suggests he was more exclusively interested in joining in and conveying who he was than in drafting artistic stylizations and impressive fonts seen elsewhere on the catchment.

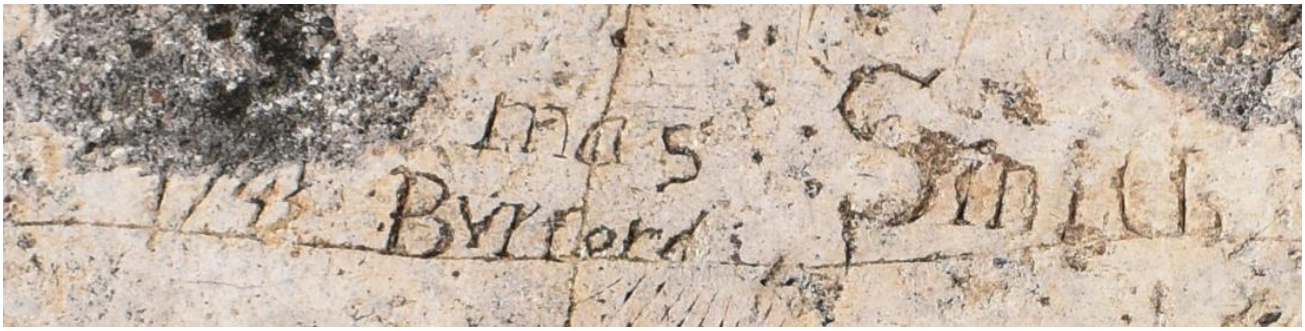


FIGURE 4.11 “(Th)omas Smith 1743 Byrford” (See Figure 2.7 *top* for Smith’s paybook entry.) (Photo by author, 2023.)

Smith sailed for Europe two weeks later, meaning that this nearly 300-year-old carving commemorates only a short, eight-month voyage to the West Indies.

That voyage was, unfortunately, to be Thomas Smith’s last major accomplishment in this life. In November of the following year, Smith perished in the Royal Naval Hospital in Port Mahon, Menorca (ADM 33-392). The circumstances are familiar at this point: Smith and 17 colleagues are reported to have died in a four-month span with no specified cause (ADM 33-392), implying another epidemic aboard *Burford*. His paybook entry indicates his wages were sent to someone in England (ADM 33-392), but the recipient could not be discerned. From descriptions of the hospital, his’s final days were spent lying in a colorless (Clark 2010), “grim and forbidding (Coad 1989:293)” sick ward with 500 other patients (Clark 2010)– a bleak end for someone who had survived so much. As discussed in following sections, Smith was probably a youth or young adult no older than 25 (Rodger 1986:78). His adventure to the West Indies was, in all likelihood, the defining experience of his short life, and his carving is a celebration of that moment. In his final days, it might have been a comfort to know that visitors in the coming centuries would continue to find the small part of himself he engraved on the other side of the world.

John Hacklet- Tavistock

One graffitist found an auspicious start to his naval career. John Hacklet joined *Tavistock* in England in October 1748 as a captain's servant (ADM 36/4195), a position held as early as age six (Rodger 1986:27), but not typically started after age twelve (Rodger 1986:14). In this role he likely lived as something between a captain's apprentice, a rated sailor, and a child learning and playing (Rodger 1986:69) on a floating wooden city. He became an able rating after two years (ADM 36/4195), which was typical for a rising career sailor (Rodger 1986:26). Hacklet sailed the Leeward Islands during an interlude between the War of Austrian Succession (1739-1748, encompassing the war of Jenkins' Ear), and the Seven Years' War (1756-63) (ADM 51/995), resulting in a less action-packed logbook than some others discussed so far. *Tavistock's* was more of a peacekeeping role: Policing English ships smuggling enslaved Africans into French colonies, and evacuating English citizens from Saint Vincent, Dominica, and Saint Lucia before the Seven Years' War (ADM 51/995). Hacklet was raised to the position of captain's clerk in April of 1752 (ADM 36/4195) (Figure 4.12), a secretarial role commanding a petty officer's standing and a small office on the quarterdeck (Rodger 1986:67). He was paid off in England with the rest of the crew in September 1752.

Fig 4.12. John Hacklet's muster entries, chronicling his progression from captain's servant to able rating to captain's clerk (ADM 36/4195).

The voyage was a promising start for young Hacklet. Many of the navy's pursers had been advanced from the position of clerk (Rodger 1986:286), and he clearly had the auspices of admiral-to-be Francis Holbourne. Young men in Hacklet's position often followed captains they found success with (Rodger 1986:97), so another position on one of Holbourne's ships may have been a future step in his career.

A Good Time in English Harbour

Good fortune was Hacklet's alone. Repairs typically taking four weeks in English Harbour (ADM 51/309) took *Tavistock* four months, dooming its crew to a semester-long stay in that "infernal hole" (Nelson 1784) from early November 1751 to late February 1752 (ADM 51/995). *Tavistock*'s main mast sprung while heaving down early into their stop, which took several weeks to replace. A crew member fell from the topmast during the replacement's installation, dying on impact (ADM 51/995). No deaths or destruction occurred in the second careening attempt, but *Tavistock* took on five feet of water the moment it was righted (ADM 51/995). They hove a third time and re-caulked, but the ship still took on four feet of water (ADM 51/995). It had been three months by this point, and, with only a few more before *Tavistock* was to be sailed home and mothballed, leadership ordered the bilge to be pumped, and stopgap measures implemented (ADM 51/995) - before anything else could go wrong.

Discipline faltered in the meantime. Francis Holbourne, *Tavistock's* captain and the commander-in-chief of the Leeward Islands Squadron (SP 36/113/1/144) had several of his men flogged for various combinations of mutiny, drunkenness, "disrespect", and desertion throughout their stay (ADM 51/995). This was not without precedent, as one crew member had stabbed another nearly to death not long before their arrival (ADM 51/995). Attempted murderers aside, Holbourne ordered more floggings within a few months than several other examined captains did over their entire voyages (ADM 51/995). The alarming frequency of desertions indicates that this was not a mere disparity in reporting. No less than 150 people (not including no-shows in England) ran away during *Tavistock*'s four-year cruise, averaging about 38 every year (ADM 36/4195). Its compliment was about 290 at any given time (ADM

36/4195), meaning that 13.1% (over 1 in 8) of *Tavistock's* crew ran away every year- nearly double the average of the entire Georgian Era navy (Rodger 1986:203). Desertion was generally more frequent in the West Indies (Rodger 1986:196), but *Tavistock*'s rises above the other ships examined here, including *Eltham* and *Burford* (ADM 33/377; ADM 33/392) both of which endured significant losses and trauma in battle. By the time they left English Harbour, eighteen people had run away (ADM 36/4195), three more were caught in the act and flogged (ADM 51/995), and one more drowned trying to swim as far away from *Tavistock* as possible (ADM 51/995). If the flogging, deserting, and drowning are any indication: *Tavistock* was a strict work environment, and English Harbour had not brought out the best in everyone.

John Hacklet's Graffiti

Meanwhile, John Hacklet carved graffiti. His carving specifies the year 1751 (or 1751/2, the end is eroded), which the logbook corroborates during that headache-inducing visit from November 1751 to February 1752 (Figure 4.13). The watering trips took place in February 1752 (ADM 51/995) meaning that Hacklet might have, quite understandably, not adjusted to the new calendar system starting that year (1752's was the first English new year to take place on January 1st instead of March 25th (Connecticut State Library 2025). There are no watering trips reported from *Tavistock*'s only other stop in 1751 (ADM 51/995).

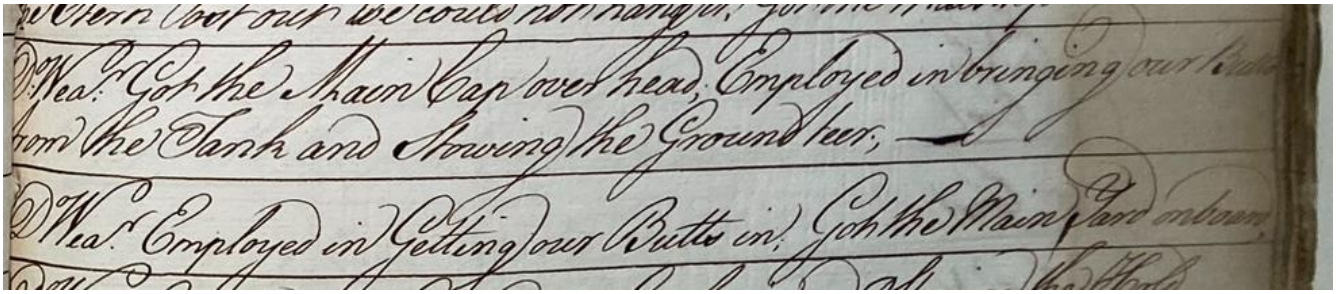


Fig 4.13. "Employed in Getting our Butts in" (ADM 51/995).

As to be expected of a rising ship's clerk, Hacklet's is one of the cleanest entries on the catchment, composed of deep, well-defined characters, with no stray lines from knife slippage (Figure

4.14). He deliberately writes each word in a different style: His full name printed with first letters capitalized, print in all-capitals, print in all lower-case, flowing cursive, and finally what appears to be a mix of capitals and lowercase print. It is adorned with a colon as well as the only dotted diamond to be found on the catchment, and the entire entry is framed in a fairly straight rectangle.

Fig 4.14. “John: Hacklet ◊ BELONGING to his *Majesty’s Ship* TAVIstock 1751”. (Photo by author, 2023.)

It is placed mere centimeters from the catchment floor, so Hacklet would have carved the roughly 1.5-meter entry while kneeling or prone. Combined with his secretarial position, his obvious mastery of multiple text styles indicates that he was well-educated and enjoyed writing. Assuming he had been twelve years old or younger (Rodger 1986:114) when he became a captain’s servant in October 1748 (ADM 36/4195), Hacklet could not have been much older than fifteen when he made this in early 1752.

There appears to have been a place near the catchment to repair and store casks over those four months. Holbourne had recommended in 1748 that a permanent shade be installed for cooperage (ADM 106/1072/222), and a 1752 dockyard survey shows that large space directly south of the catchment had been clear-cut, with four small structures built (Horneck 1752) sometime after the 1745 survey (Martel 1745). *Burford*’s crew had done something similar in 1743, erecting a temporary sail-tent for storage at or near the catchment (ADM 51/4133). Another map from 1769 shows the structures gone, replaced by a line of specified artificer’s cabins farther uphill (British Royal Navy Surveyor 1769), hinting that the space had also been coopers’ main workspace and accommodations during *Tavistock’s* 1751-1752 visit.

The logbook not mentioning any sail-tents further indicates that this infrastructure was built by then, perhaps at Holbourne's recommendation. What this means for the graffiti is that coopers and cooper's mates aboard *Tavistock* and other ships visiting after this time likely had 24-hour access to the catchment and so had even more opportunity to carve than the ratings delivering and retrieving casks.

The other Tavistock Carving

It is uncertain whether he also carved the other *Tavistock* entry, located on the Southeast wall (Figure 4.15). The best evidence against it is Hacklet's spelling of "majesty's" with an 'e' and an apostrophe, versus this alternate spelling using an 'I' and no apostrophe, but Hacklet may just as well have spelled it two different ways.

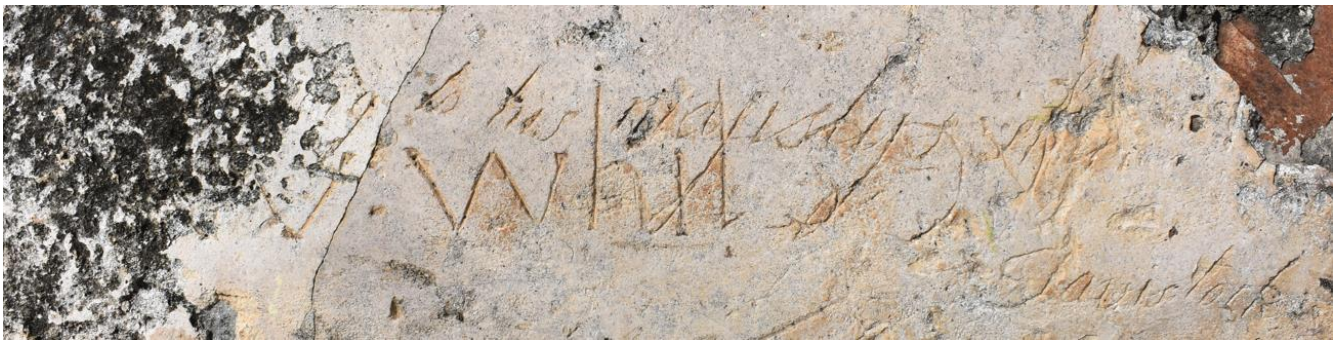


Fig 4.15. "...[Belong]ing to his majistys ship Tavistock", on the Southeast Wall. (Photo by author, 2023).

The best argument for it being Hacklet's work is that it would have made sense for Hacklet to place a second entry far away from his first, while an acquaintance might have placed their entry next to Hacklet's. Of course, that shipmate might have despised the captain's pet, or just not have found Hacklet's, so no clear answer emerges.

Andrew Brand- Swan

In 1752, the 10-gun (Winfield 2007) sloop *Swan* cruised in to English Harbour for careening (ADM 51/995). Its logbook was not obtained in time for this study, but *Tavistock*, lying in English Harbour at the time, reports that *Swan* arrived January 7th, 1752, careened on the 18th, and departed on

the 30th (ADM 51/995). Graffiti carved by able rating (ADM 36/3489) Andrew Brand in 1751 (Figure 4.16), indicates that *Swan* had either stopped in English Harbour prior to its encounter with *Tavistock*, or that Brand, quite understandably, did not adjust to the new calendar system starting that year (1752's was the first English new year to take place on January 1st instead of March 25th (Connecticut State Library 2025).) No correspondence mentioning or originating from *Swan* in English Harbour before 1752 was located, so the latter seems more likely.

Fig 4.16. "ANDREW BR[A]ND SWAN KINGHORN 1751" (1751 contrast-boosted for visibility). (Photo by author, 2023.)

Andrew Brand engraved his name and ship, the year, and a likely reference to the coastal town and parish in Fife, Scotland. If correctly interpreted, Brand's is the second of two entries to list the author's hometown, the first being a sailor from Bury St Edmond's in county Suffolk, UK (discussed in Chapter 6). Brand writes in all capitals, and his only unique stylization is a diagonal slash threw the 'D' in 'BRAND'. His entry is among the few that are well-preserved on the Southwest wall. Unlike the Northeast wall, the Southwest has lacked tree-cover to mitigate erosion from heavy rainstorms for some time, resulting in nearly all graffiti on its slanted top half being effaced, while Brand's and some other entries on the vertical bottom remain legible.

Brand's first naval position was aboard the gunship *Lyme* as an able rating (ADM 107/5). His entry as an able seaman instead of an ordinary or landsman indicates that he had sailing experience prior to his naval career (Rodger 1986:26). He joined *Sw*an for a West Indies cruise in April 1751, was elevated to midshipman in March of 1754 (Figure 4.17) (ADM 36/3489), and paid off in England in August 1754 (ADM 107/5).

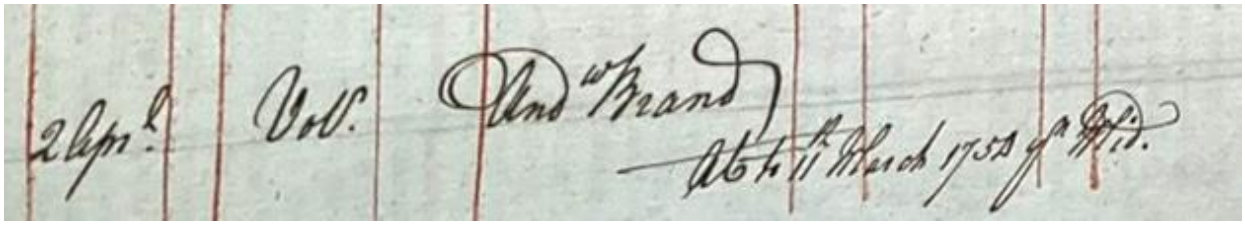
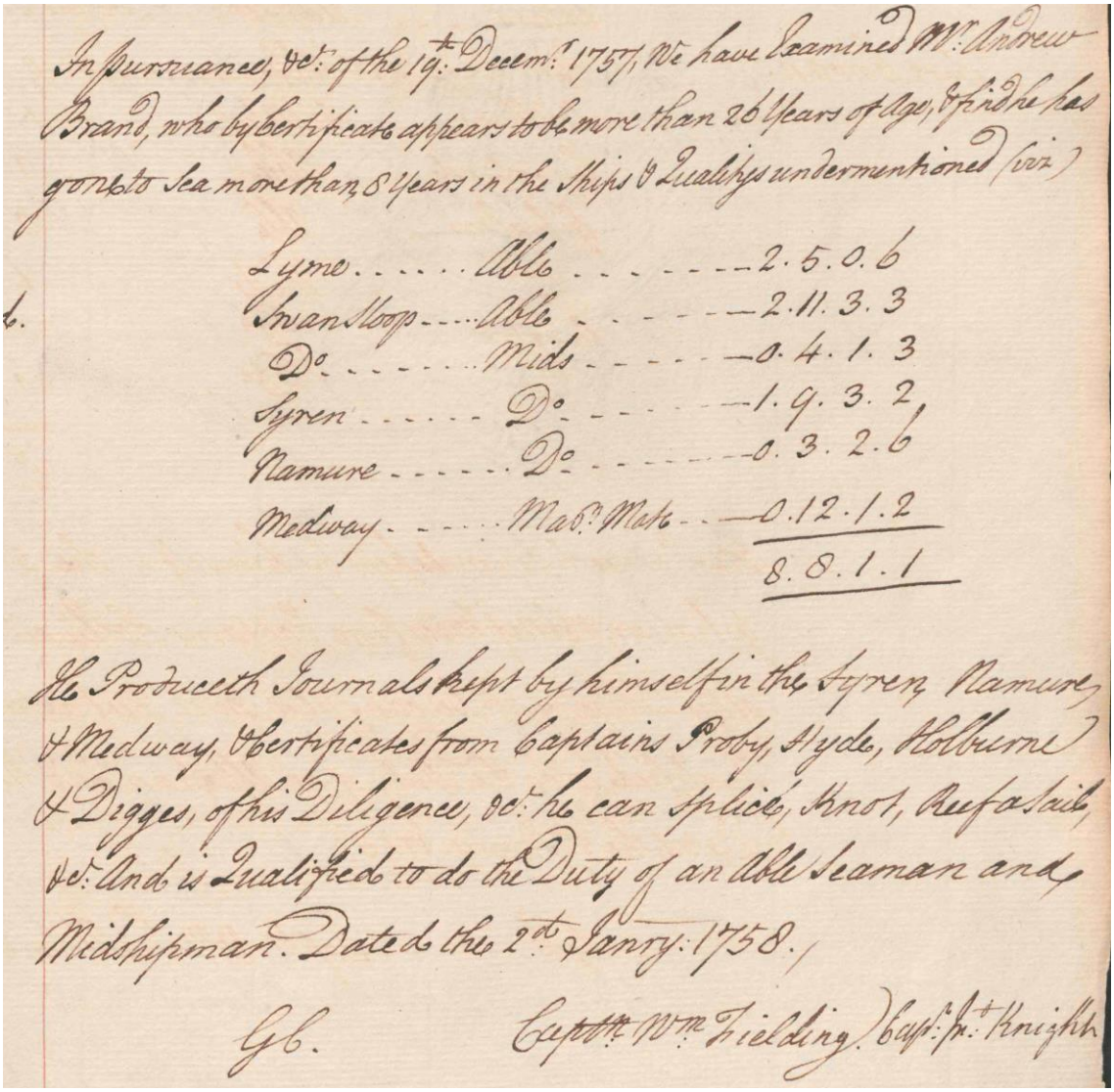


Fig 4.17. Andrew Brand's muster entry, denoting his 1754 promotion to midshipman (ADM 36-3489).

Brand continued as a midshipman aboard the gunships *Siren* and *Namur* for just over two combined years, and thereafter was a master's mate aboard the warship *Medway* for a year (ADM 107/5).

Most sailors' service records are difficult to trace because there rarely exist single documents detailing every ship they had served on. Their muster entries show where they were entered and discharged from one ship, but nothing more. Andrew Brand's career can be tracked over the following years because he passed his lieutenant's examination on December 19th, 1757 (Figure 4.18).



In pursuance, &c: of the 19th Decem: 1757, We have Examined Mr Andrew Brand, who by Certificate appears to be more than 26 Years of Age, & finds he has gone to Sea more than 8 Years in the Ships & Qualitys undermentioned (viz)

Lyme	Able	2.5.0.6
Swan Sloop	Able	2.11.3.3
Do	Mids	0.4.1.3
Syren	Do	1.9.3.2
Namure	Do	0.3.2.6
Medway	Mad: Mate	0.12.1.2
		8.8.1.1

He Produceth Journals kept by himself in the Syren, Namure, & Medway, Certificates from Captains Proby, Hyde, Holburne & Digges, of his Diligence, &c: he can Splice, Knot, Reef a Sail, &c: And is Qualified to do the Duty of an Able Seaman and Midshipman. Dated the 2d Janry: 1758.

G.L. Capt: Wm Fielding. Capt: Jn: Knight

Fig 4.18. Andrew Brand's lieutenant's exam passing certificate (ADM 107/5).

Brand's certificate includes a full account of his accumulated eight years and eight months' service aboard five naval warships, affirms his ability to splice, knot, and reef a sail, and bears testament to his good character from four different captains ADM 107/5. It is unclear if the Holburne listed is the same Francis Holburne that advanced John Hacklet's career aboard *Tavistock,* or his contemporary, Captain William Holburne. The certificate specifies that he was 26 years of age in December, 1758 **(**ADM 107/5), which means that Andrew Brand carved his January 1752 graffiti when he was nineteen or twenty years old. The likely reference to Kinghorn, Scotland is best interpreted as his hometown. Thus,

one graffitist is revealed to have been an uncommonly ambitious 19-year-old Scottish kid entering his third year of naval service, who went on to become a commissioned lieutenant before his 27th birthday. Further research may reveal more about his later career, as the movements of commissioned officers are clearly better documented than those of their subordinates. It is worth noting that Brand's first ship, HMS *Lyme* (ADM 107/5), only sailed the Mediterranean before he was paid off (Winfield 2007). This means that Brand had just crossed the Atlantic for the first time in his life shortly before carving his graffiti.

The Run List

The identified sailors were evidently content with their lot, but there were always crew members ready to try their luck elsewhere —given the right opportunity. Financial incentives, attachments to friends on other ships, and abuses from leadership drove many sailors from their posts (Rodger 1986:194-6). The West Indies was one of the most frequent venues of desertion in the British Navy (Rodger 1986:96). Desertions from the Leeward Islands squadron occurred almost entirely in two places: Carlisle Bay (Bridgetown), Barbados, and English Harbour (ADM 36/4195; ADM 36/92). The latter was a short journey away from the city of Saint John's, Antigua's largest economic and population center. Merchant ships regularly stopped in Saint John's (ADM 51/309) with food and other essentials not produced on the island (Waters 2018:28) before continuing on to England or the American Colonies (ADM 51/309). West Indiamen offered an attractive wage for hands on the return trip to England, and were known to ask few questions when help presented itself in a hurry (Rodger 1986:157). The trick would have been casting off before their former employer rounded the island and recognized them. Whereas stops in most locations one to ten days, repair stops in English Harbour frequently exceeded a month (ADM 51/309; ADM 51/995), providing ample time to slip away and board another ship. Captain John Dilkes of HMS *Madras* reports in 1797 that many of his crew deserted while the ship was being refit in English Harbour (ADM 1/1719/105). He singles out known flight-risk William Gorton as

the author of a letter encouraging his crew mates to run, assuring that they would be "protected in St John's" (ADM 1/1719/105). Their confidence in this plan implicates St. John's and, by extension, English Harbour, as a deserter's gateway to a life away from the Navy.

If escape was inevitable, deserters at least had to work for it. Gated walls enclosed both the careenage on the East bank of the harbor and the naval yard on the west (Martel 1745), deterring all but the resourceful climbers. A popular option was swimming away from the ship while it was in moored in Freeman's Bay or by the careening wharf (ADM 51/995), but results varied greatly. Not all sailors were strong swimmers, and some did drown swimming across the harbor (ADM 51/995). Perhaps out of kindness, at least one was marked as "deceased" rather than "run" in the ship's muster (ADM 51/995), suggesting that more sailors might have died running than musters let on.

It was then unwise to send just anyone on a boat ride across the harbor, beyond the dockyard walls. None of the ships' logs or musters indicate a single desertion from the Tank Bay catchment and fleetingly few from watering trips elsewhere, and desertions happen to never coincide with watering trips (ADM 36; ADM 51; ADM 52) *Anglesea*'s muster diligently reports the exact moment sailors ran throughout the voyage, and it specifies that several ran from the careenage—not from the longboat sent to the catchment (ADM 36/92). Several musters track whether sailors ran (or swam) from the ship itself or from the longboat while on errands, and instances of the latter are few and far between (ADM 36). The two runners from *Eltham* at St. Kitts made their swim for it—one drowning in the process—the very night *after* the longboat took a party ashore to fetch water, indicating that the longboat was not a viable escape route anywhere (ADM 51/309). The best explanation is that leadership recognized how easy it was to slip away on these outings, and were careful to select sailors they could trust to work independently and return from their errands. The troublemakers and flight-risks were likely never sent to the Tank Bay catchment, nor were they likely to have interrupted their escape to carve graffiti.

Discussion

The seven graffitists examined were all dependable and committed to their careers. Three of them were promoted on the same voyage they made their carvings, and at least one had reached the quarterdeck within six years. At least three were sending their wages home, suggesting they might have been providing for family in England (Some might even have been married, but that exceeds the scope of this study). Their being sent out to work independently indicates they had garnered a level of trust from their superiors, particularly so in a hot spot for desertion like English Harbour. None faced noteworthy disciplinary action—no neglect of duty, fights, drunkenness, or insubordination—despite the adverse experiences of battle, sickness, and whatever else incited desertions whenever a ship anchored in English Harbour. They all remained in good standing on their ships until they either finished their voyage, joined another naval vessel, or perished while in service.

They were most likely young men, or even teenagers. Andrew Brand was nineteen years old when he made his carving (ADM 107/5), and John Hacklet could not have been much older than fifteen (Rodger 1986:14; ADM 36/4195). These two fall within the typical age demographic of ratings the 18th century Navy, of which the majority were no older than 25 (Rodger 1986:78), and this seems like a fair estimation of the other five. The six of the seven examined were able ratings, and the seventh was a midshipman, indicating that they had ample sailing experience before the voyage (Rodger 1986:26). They were most likely from the British Isles, given their points of origin (ADM 36; ADM 33) and/or their sending money to the same places as their comrades who joined in England (ADM 33).

Their carvings suggest that they all found meaning or identity in their ships; at least enough to honor it next to their own names. Andrew Brand felt compelled to also include their hometown, but it received third billing *after* their ship's name; the other six sailors did not include their hometown at all. This might have been because the ship meant more to them at that moment than whatever might have been waiting for them across the Atlantic. John Home specifically wrote the time frame he was on *Roebuck,* making explicit that it came to represent the current stage of his life. Their ships were their

24/7 homes and workspaces, so it is no surprise that they carried sufficient emotional weight to be commemorated on the catchment.

Their choice to include their ships makes the seven identifiable nearly three hundred years later, but it also makes them outliers among the dozens of others who did *not* include their ships, limiting what conclusions can be drawn about the catchment graffitists as a whole. They almost certainly skewed young, going purely off demographic data (Rodger 1986:78), and the small identified sample indicates that they were probably ratings. They all had likely garnered the same level of trust, given that they worked in the same context of desertions. The abundance of carvings made during the War of Jenkins' Ear suggests that their authors were in the Caribbean for the same purpose as the five identified from that time. Robert Lyon and Thomas Smith were veterans of the same large fleet invasions; there are probably plenty of others who witnessed the carnage at La Guaira and Porto Cabello, or perished in it. Those writing during or after the Seven Years War are harder to imagine because no ships logbooks were researched in depth past 1754 in this project.

The seven adding their ships suggests a level of contentment not necessarily shared by their comrades. Sailors disenchanted with the navy, quietly resentful of their leaders, or simply homesick were probably not eager to memorialize their current workplace. The seven are also the only graffitists proven capable of writing more their own names. Literacy was an essential skill to aspiring officers that sailors writing only their names or initials might have possessed, and so it would be foolish to assume that they advanced beyond their station as often as the seven did. The seven's potentially greater contentment and better career trajectories would have made them less likely to act out, and so there is no guarantee that other names on the catchment did not also appear on ships' run lists, or in logbooks followed by a number of lashes. The reality is that we will never learn who most of these graffitists were; what little we know is what they shared with the seven who wrote just enough to follow.

Theoretical Guestbook

Many factors motivating the sailor-graffitists are observable in current-day guestbooks. Commonly found at short-term lodgings, weddings, and funerals, guestbooks allow visitors to contribute to ever-growing compilations of names and brief messages. Governing these contributions are unwritten rules that are easily ascertained by reading prior entries, their strictness varying between contexts. Entries serve to commemorate one's presence at significant events or milestones. At weddings they show one's joy for a new chapter in friends' lives; at funerals they show love and support as the bereaved prepare for life without their loved one; and in travelers' BnBs they commemorate having reached new, faraway destinations. Those who encounter them are pulled in by prior entries and are compelled to add their own.

Commemoration is the most compelling motive for the first sailor-graffitist(s) to have carved their names or initials between 1734 and 1737. Most sailors sent to the catchment would have been young men or children on a big adventure across the Atlantic, far from home. It was John Hacklet's first time sailing away from home, and Andrew Brand's first time sailing beyond Europe, so it seems likely to have been true of others. The joys and challenges they experienced were varied, but it was no doubt a formative experience for many of them. John Home clearly found meaning and growth aboard *Roebuck*, explicitly dedicating his carving to the time he spent there. Many had cause for celebration and optimism. Home had been promoted only months prior; Thomas Smith had just proven himself in two historic battles; Hacklet had proven himself a competent sailor and was being considered to serve at a higher level, under the auspices of the commander-in-chief (SP 36/113/1/144) of the Leeward Islands Squadron; and Brand was also on the fast-track to the quarterdeck. These accomplishments say nothing of the countless, unknowable moments of personal growth many would have had while coming of age in the navy. Given the deaths, desertions, and mishaps commonplace in the "infernal hole" (Nelson 1784) of English Harbour (ADM 51/309), it is more likely that the sailors were commemorating their entire adventures rather than their arrival in the naval dockyard. This

commemorative spirit accounts for the carvings' general contents. With little beyond names and dates, all that the graffiti communicate is "I am here, I exist, I was here on ___ date". Taking "here" to mean the West Indies in general, these are the essential facts needed to build monuments to their adventures, as if they were among the events commemorated on plaques and statues in England. This hypothetical inspiration and subsequent visual language have been referred to as the "commemorative aesthetic" (Clarke et Al 2010). If commemoration were not the primary motivator, we would see more drawings and words of pithy wisdom, and fewer austere engravings that have less in common with visual pieces and more with headstones and monuments. In this way the carvings serve the same commemorative function as current-day guestbooks.

Once the first of these commemorative carvings had been made, subsequent sailors fetching water would have been inspired to follow suit. As with guestbooks, a berth of existing entries becomes an irresistible invitation to newcomers. One person's scratched-in initials might have been dismissed as a one-off curiosity, but a few dozen evidently had the power to pull in new authors for decades to come, including those who would have never had the idea independently. Augmenting this power was the sailor-graffitists' professional connection to authors past and future. Since the dockyard and surrounding plantations, all had their own cisterns (Harris 2015; Luffman 1787) , graffitists could be confident that they had been written to, and so were writing to, fellow naval sailors. Robert Lyon and Thomas Smith were both present for many of the same significant moments during the War of Jenkins' Ear, as were many others, according to the statistical analysis of dates. This base commonality is true of authors in other guestbooks, be it between travelers in BnBs, friends at weddings, or mourners at funerals. The catchment graffiti's relatability and eventual numerical power would have instilled something like FOMO (fear of missing out) in sailors who happened upon it, explaining why there were once over 200 carvings all in the same place. Relatability also accounts for why there were six times more ships mentioned than localities in England: Ships were more relevant to their present life and their

connection to other sailors than whatever English town they had once come from. This bias towards ships indicates that the graffitists sought to relate to other sailors rather than distinguish themselves from them.

As with guest books, there were unwritten rules governing sailors' contributions. Their influence is apparent from the conspicuous lack of material deviating from the commemorative aesthetic across the 191 carvings. Sailors' creativity and artistic skill manifested in personalized fonts and ornaments that serve to decorate carvings without transforming them into something beyond the well-established "Name+date (+ship)" template. Nathaniel Russell adhered to it to the point of redundancy, despite finding six opportunities to break the mold. It was clearly not for want of passion or time, and utter nihilism is required to believe that he and his comrades all lacked the imagination to draw a simple picture. A decentralized "style guide" was in place. Like a guestbook, sailors learned the catchment's rules by observing and emulating prior entries. The first few carvings were minimalistic, and so those following remained minimalistic. Their consistent adherence to the format, combined with their likely inspiration from graves and memorials, suggest the tone to have been respectful or reflective, rather than playful. Respect is evident in the many efforts taken to avoid vandalizing existing works, such as Robert Lyon derailing his carving once it reached someone else's, carvings crammed into small open patches, and others written at inconvenient angles. Sailors' continued observance and respect for the tradition best explains the general similarity between the 191 carvings, as is the case in current-day guestbooks.

From Jerusalem to Tank Bay

On the Northeast Wall sits a mostly eroded carving with a peculiar symbol: "□ MERR…" (Figure 4.19 *Right*). It seems like a lost cause for interpretation, but circumstances point to a surprising 19th century origin. The symbol in question is a plus shape with notches on all four ends, and a dot inscribed in each resulting quadrant. It closely resembles a Jerusalem cross (Figure 4.19 *Left*), a symbol

dating back to the First Crusade (Schick 1894) commonly associated with Christian Pilgrims who had reached the holy city (Fleming 2000). One well-documented graffitist actually visited Jerusalem with his brother in 1882, where they both had the symbol tattooed on their arms, as had their father had in 1862 (Sebag Montefiore 2011:370).

Figure 4.19. *Left,* A Jerusalem cross (Schick 1894). *Right*, "□ MERR…" on the Northeast wall (Photo by Author 2023).

He went on to visit English Harbour as a British Royal Navy sailor in 1884 (Wigram 1914). In a famous "boyish Christmas greeting" (Bryant 1935), he and some others went ashore to paint a large message (Wigram 1914) in the archway of the dockyard's canvas and cordage store (Nicholson 1999) reading "A MERRY XMAS & HAPPY NEW Year 2 You All" (FIGURE 4.20).

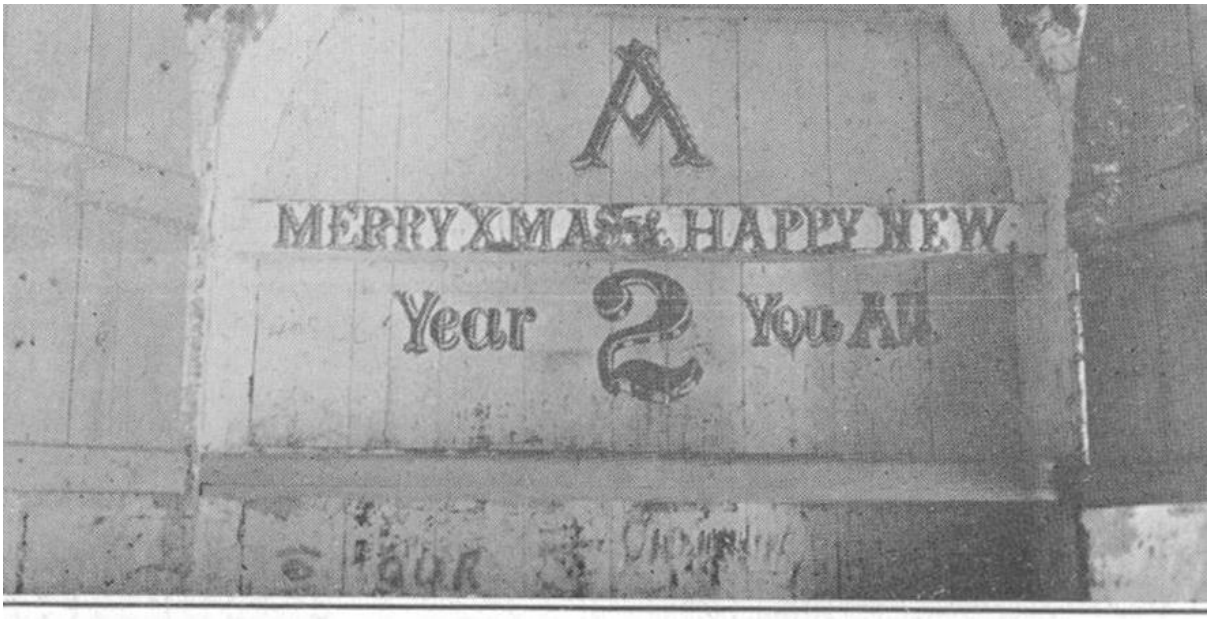


Figure 4.20. Photograph of the archway of the canvas and cordage store (Nutting 1920). This was destroyed in a 1950 hurricane (Nicholson 1999).

This matches the carving 400 meters away bearing the symbol he had tattooed on his arm, which strongly suggests that he had a hand in both. The sailor in question was George Frederick Ernest Albert, also known as King George V.

Then-Prince George visited Jerusalem with his brother Albert Victor while they were Navy cadets coming of age aboard training ship *Bacchante* in 1882 (Nicholson 1952:29). Though they received the inevitable royal welcome in several places they stopped, they lived as the other cadets and midshipmen did for the majority of their time aboard (Nicholson 1952:27-31). In a letter to his mother, Queen Alexandria of Denmark, he proudly declares that he and his brother had followed their father's example and received the Jerusalem Cross tattoo:

"We have been tatoed by the same old man that tatoed Papa & the same thing too the 5 crosses. You ask Papa to show his arm" (George Frederick Ernest Albert, quoted in Nicholson 1952:29).

Prince George continued his naval service after, sailing the Caribbean and coastal Canada from 1883 to 1884 aboard HMS *Canada* as a midshipman and, eventually, sublieutenant (Nicholson 1952:35-6). It

was during this cruise that he and some others made the aforementioned painting on the canvas and cordage store (Wigram 1914), and when he likely carved his tattoo and Christmas message visible on the Tank Bay Catchment.

There is ample room for doubt. For one, there are dots in each corner of the symbol, not crosses. The symbol in question is small, which would have made it difficult for the author to craft deep, articulated crosses, so it makes sense for dots to be there in their stead. But it still remains possible that someone else drew an ornate cross that happens to look like the Jerusalem cross tattoo George V described on his arm. The Jerusalem cross also does not appear on the door in the photograph, so there is no archaeological connection between the two, beyond a word that is only *probably* the start of the same message. From George V's recollection of that night, the graffiti on the door was a group effort, so he might not have included something as personal as a family tattoo with it. When faced with the personalized names of individual people on the catchment, however, he may well have made his more specific to himself, and so included the tattoo.

His cruise of the Caribbean was two years after his visit to Jerusalem, on a different ship with different people (his brother was not present for this later voyage) (Nicholson 1952:29-35), so there is no huge chance that someone else was present for both and had also received the symbol; but it is not impossible. From a historiographical standpoint, there is an inescapable temptation to connect things like this to recognizable, "important" people. It would be hypocritical to scrutinize Frances Lanaghan's 1844 claim of having found Horatio Nelson's signature, only to tout uncritically the signature of a literal king of England. There is simply too little data to be certain. What is certain is that George V had the unique symbol on the catchment tattooed on his arm two years before he painted graffiti elsewhere in the dockyard, and the message he painted begins the same way as what remains on the catchment. This makes King George V a very, very likely suspect.

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION

Examining the Tank Bay catchment graffiti through archaeological, historical, and theoretical lenses has revealed a surprising amount about its authors and context. Its authors were primarily young British Royal Navy sailors far from home, some on their first voyage, likely many sending their pay home to family. They carved their graffiti while they were sent out to fill ships' water casks, chiseling away at the catchment's facades when not actively hoisting buckets of water from the cisterns. Their carvings consist almost exclusively of names, initials, and dates, with occasional mentions of ships or hometowns. There are no purely visual elements; creativity was instead poured into stylizing their text and occasionally adorning it with unique symbols. Observable efforts to not disturb existing entries likely reflect a desire for legibility and a respect for the sailors who came before them. The plurality of the graffiti originates from the Caribbean theater of the War of Jenkins' Ear (1739-1743) The rest correlates positively with dockyard traffic, having been carved most frequently during wartime and the immediate years preceding and succeeding. The tradition had effectively died by 1783, likely due to stops in English Harbour gradually shortening as dockyard infrastructure and watering technology improved in the latter half of the 18th century.

Seven sailors were investigated, made possible only by their carvings including their ships with their names and dates. Five sailed the Caribbean during the War of Jenkins' ear, of which at least two saw combat in sea battles and in invasions of Spanish ports. The other two sailed in the early 1750s in the buildup to the Seven Years' War. Their visits to English Harbour varied in duration from mere days to several months. The years they included in their graffiti matched when their ships watered in English Harbour, and the only entry with an exact date was made on a day when sailors from the author's ship were sent to fetch water at to catchment. Six of the seven were able ratings when they made their graffiti, and the seventh was a midshipman. Three of the seven were promoted on that same voyage, two to midshipman and one to clerk, and at least one of the midshipmen went on to become an officer.

That, combined with all seven being in good standing on their ships indicates that the few graffitists identified were dedicated to their sailing careers and were well-adjusted to the Navy.

Treating the catchment as one large, stone guestbook offers theoretical insights into their motivations. Their carvings were almost certainly to commemorate them and their adventures in the West Indies. Existing entries inspired new contributions and shaped their work, as did the sailors' perceived relatability to each other across time.

Future Research

The most exciting implication of these findings is the possibility of other similar sites existing elsewhere in the Leeward Islands. The case for their existence is that sailors who carved graffiti at English Harbour went on to do the same elsewhere. This seems plausible, given the sheer number signatories on the catchment, but no documentation of a similar assemblage in the Leeward Islands was located, as of this writing. Contextualizing the graffiti has made clear that the catchment is a very unique site whose formation and survival are due to a specific combination of circumstances not found in many places. If another site does exist, it almost certainly is one with an accommodating surface, situated in a derelict location once frequented by historic sailors. The "canvas" would not need to be an enormous stone-and-brick water catchment; there only needs to be enough durable, accessible surface(s) in close proximity for carvings to accumulate over time, like the whalers' stones on Cocos Island (Raupp et al 2018). Like the catchment, the canvas needs to have been of little aesthetic importance to authorities, and it must have been regularly visited by sailors cut loose to do a job unsupervised, such as cutting brush (Raupp et al 2018) or filling water casks. Finally, the site must have survived up to 300 years of earthquakes, hurricanes, and human development- which the catchment has, barring restorations to maintain functionality.

LiDAR and other, more advanced recording techniques might reveal more Tank Bay catchment graffiti, particularly on the dilapidated Southeast wall. Photos taken with a scale bar would provide the

size information missing here. More research can also be done on the seven identified graffitists. Thomas Boorne of *Advice* and Thomas Rule of *Captain* can both be investigated in the manner described in Chapter 4. Andrew Brand's service record before and after his time aboard *Swan* is listed above; John Hacklet may have followed Francis Holbourne or another officer after *Tavistock*; Nat Russell was discharged onto HMS *Sandwich*; and John Home is probably still sailing to this day.

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Appendix A: Graffiti Catalog

W=Wall. 1=NE; 2=SE; 3=SW. Types: I=Initials, N=Name, D=Date, S=Ship's name, L=Location.
I or N: I=Intact, N=Not intact. Atrs#: Possible number of authors.

W	PHOTO	CONTENTS	TYPES	I or N	S or V	DATE	YearClean	Decade	Atrs#	NON-Z/26	FRAME
1	3.179	CM 1741 (In red)	I D	I	S	1741	1741	1740-9	1		
1		I+G	I	I	S				1	**Plus +**	
1		Tohio (?) Carber(?)	N	I	S				1		
1	1.144	---les --- J. MAHael	N	N	V				1		Box
1	1.146	WIllA?m Ram?ey	N	I	V				1		
1		Andw--- P--- B--- 1744	N D	N	V	1744	1744	1740-9	1		
1	1.149-50	(superscript o) Rule Augt y 19th 1748	N D	N	V	1748 Aug 19	1748	1740-9	1		Box
1		C? P (carved in Rules' box	I	I	V				1		
1		RH	I	I	V				1		
1		Thom---	N	N	V				1		
1		?TP (backwards P), J? (all boxed)	I	I	V				1		Box
1		Robert Tiegin(?) 1751 (Practice swing R nearby)	N D	I	V	1751	1751	1750-9	1		Box
1		Baph(?) Isen(?)	N	N	V				1		
1		Tha---	N	N	V				1		Box
1	1.151	RW	I	I	V				1		
1		Thomas Home T--- (below)	N	N	V				1		
1		WB 1779 (Added 2nd attachment box around date))	I D	I	V	1779	1779	1770-9	1		Box
1		H Ganier Pegasus(?)	N S	I	V				1		Box
1		John ogden.. (dotted)	N	I	V				1		
1		JE (below)	I	I	V				1		
1		Rol Slater ??, (overlining:) Michael	N	I	V				2		Underline
1		Nat (diamond) Ru---	N	N	S				1	**Diamond ◊**	
1		H.S	I	I	S				1		
1		---S 1746	D	N	S	1746	1746	1740-9	1		Box
1		NE(?) 86	D	N	S	1786	1786	1780-9	1		
1		JC	I	I	S				1		
1		(two letters circled)	I	I	S				1		Circle
1		(Long illegible)---1748	D	N	V	1748	1748	1740-9	1		
1		Robert H 1756	N D	I	V	1756	1756	1750-9	1		
1		N+K	I	I	V				1	**Plus +**	
1		JE	I	I	V				1		
1	1.152	RM	I	I	V				1		
1		Robt Lyon (Boxed) aboard his maj ship Eltham 1741 (date circled)	N D S	I	V	1741	1741	1740-9	1		Circle
1		Double-diamond infinity C	D unclear	N	S				1	**2 Diamonds ◊◊**	
1		John MiLLett 1742	N D	I	V	1742	1742	1740-9	1		Circle
1		John Cone 1742	N D	I	V	1742	1742	1740-9	1		Circle
1		John A---	N	N	V				1		Circle
1		Rich'd I/J--- (Boxed)	N	N	V				1		Box
1		JB	I	I	V				1		
1		Willm (Diamond) Glouer (Glover)	N	I	V				1	**Diamond ◊**	Box
1		AF (Boxed), Bangs or Banks written small above it	I	I	V				1		Box
1		Jo--- (overline) Mi--- (all in a box)	N	N	S				1		Box
1		John ??ol	N	N	S				1		
1		Jn Fowler	N	I	V				1		
1		Wx Ray 1761	N D	I	V	1761	1761	1760-9	1	**X abbrev.**	
1		Martin Martin (maybe re-did it?)	N	I	V				1		
1	1.153	TAJARAP ^RA	I	I	V				3-4		Underline
1		JC	I	I	V				1		
1		Joh (John presumably) (likely below eroded)	N	N	V				1		
1		John Pitchath Ocber 16 17??	N D	I	V	17?? Oct 16			1		
1		John--- (below erroded)	N	N	V				1		
1		JH	I	I	V				1		
1	1.156	Nat Russell	N	N	V				1		
1		John: Home Roebuck 1736 17391(?)	N D S	I	V	1736-1739	1739	1730-9	1	**Colon :**	Box
1		Jn Hacklett (Diamond) Belonging to his majesty's ship Tavisto-- 1751	N D S	I	V	1751	1751	1750-9	1	**Dotted ◊**	Box
1		748 NM W+T	I D	N	V	1748	1748	1740-9	1	**Plus +**	

W	PHOTO	CONTENTS	TYPES	I or N	S or V	DATE	YearClean	Decade	Atrs#	NON-Z/26	FRAME
1		WP 174(2)3	I D	I	V	1742/3	1743	1740-9	1		
1		JH(dot)MH(dot)--?? 1758	I D	I	V	1758	1758	1750-9	2	**Dot •**	Box
1		HR	I	I	V				1		
1		Wm Gray 1744	N D	I	S	1744	1744	1740-9	1		
1		GEORGE X---	N	N	V				1	**X spacer**	
1		WH	I	I	V				1		
1		A Hall 1777	N D	I	V	1777	1777	1770-9	1		
1		T Hunt 1777 (similar style to ^)	N D	I	V	1777	1777	1770-9	1		
1		Cunt	Profanity	I	V				1		
1		JOHN---	N	N	V				1		
1	1.159	NA? (Diamond) Russel Anglesea may 28 1740	N D S	I	V	1740 May 28	1740	1740-9	1	**Diamond ◊**	
1		P+P	I	I	V				1	**Plus +**	Box
1		07 John Webb 40? Anglsea Dow…	N D S	N	V	1740 Jul	1740	1740-9	1		
1		Games Gayter	N	N	V				1		
1		PA	I	I	S				1		Box
1		RC	I	I	V				1		Box
1		JW	I	I	V				1		
1		Wm W---	N	N	V				1		
1	1.161	JOHN MOULES	N	N	S				1		
1		ET 1752	I D	I	V	1752	1752	1750-9	1		
1		Thos Davis 1758	N D	I	V	1758	1758	1750-9	1		
1		Robert So--- (Lots illegible) 1739; Tho---	N D	N	S	1739	1739	1730-9	2		Box
1		Feb 1739 B--- His majesties Ship Roebuck	N D S	N	V	1739 Feb	1740	1740-9	1		
1		Tho Garryer	N	N	S				1		
1	1.162; 3.238-9	C?caud + Love/Loue 1743	N D	I	V	1743	1743	1740-9	1	**Plus +**	Box
1		TN	I	I	V				1		
1		W (boxed alone)	I	I	S				1		Box
1		JxBRP	I	I	V				1-2	**X spacer**	
1		JDWH 17478 (7 above eight)	I D	I	V	1747/8	1748	1740-9	1-4		Box
1		WD	I	I	S				1		Box
1		RR	I	I	S				1		Box
1		Nat (diamond) A---	N	N	S				1	**Diamond ◊**	
1		Pe x M	I	I	S				1	**X spacer**	
1		W Hamilton	N	I	S				1		
1		WB (Big)	I	N	V				1		
1	1.163; 3.240	John Sidney Jo---	N	N	V				1		
1		Peter x A?lam--- Fab (numbers)	N D	I	V	Feb			1	**X spacer**	
1		John x B--- 174?	N D	N	V	174?		1740-9	1	**X spacer**	
1		JG 1740 (boxed)	I D	I	S	1740	1740	1740-9	1		Box
1		H---Dy 1757	N D	I	V	1757	1757	1750-9	1		Box
1	1.165; 3.250	---yonett Trice Be---	N	N	V				1		
1		Jn Coahson	N	I	V				1		
1		Nathaniel Russell (diamond) Anglesea	N S	I	V				1	**Diamond ◊**	
1		Willm (3 dots) Richar---	N	N	V				1	**3 dots ⁖**	
1		RC	I	I	V				1		
1		THOMAS x ---	N	N	V				1		
1		MxM	I	N	V				1	**X spacer**	
1		?K JOSEPH	N	N	V				1		
2a	1.921	The---s T---	N	N	V				1		
2a		T (heart) D 1753	I D	I	V	1753	1753	1750-9	1-2	**Heart ♥ outline**	
2a		XMacknamarx 1776	N D	N	V	1776	1776	1770-9	1	**X spacer**	
2a		RE Jacob	N	N	V				1		
2a	1.923; 3.255	William S---s 1742	N D	N	V	1742	1742	1740-9	1		
2a		??? 1742x3	D	N	V	1742/3	1743	1740-9	1	**X spacer**	
2a	3.257	JW 1744	I D	N	V	1744	1744	1740-9	1		
2a		?--- 1740	D	N	V	1740	1740	1740-9	1		
2a		JB	I	N	V				1		
2a		John Doc??s	N	N	V				1		

W	PHOTO	CONTENTS	TYPES	I or N	S or V	DATE	YearClean	Decade	Atrs#	NON-Z/26	FRAME
2a		John Doc??s	N	N	V				1		
2a	3.260-1	WL 1737	I D	N	S	1737	1737	1730-9	1		
2a		Thomas Smith 1743 Byrford	N D S	N	S	1743	1743	1740-9	1		
2a	3.262	Chas Christian 1765	N D	I	V	1765	1765	1760-9	1		
2a		RD	I	I	S				1		
2b	3.266	n: Anderson 1753	N D	N	V	1753	1753	1750-9	1	**Colon :**	
2b	**3.267; 1.311**	Rob Gu?o? Jany 19 174?	N D	N	S	174? Jan 19		1740-9	1		Box
2b		JO(dotted) ???4	N D	N	V	???4			1		
2b	3.27	JB	I	I	V				1		
2b	**3.271; 1.315**	??? 1737 lots else here	D	N	V	1737	1737	1730-9	1		
2b	3.272	ROC 1755	I D	N	V	1755	1755	1750-9	1		
2b	**1.340; 3.273**	Richerd Gibbins 1752	N D	I	V	1752	1752	1750-9	1		Box
2b		J Reed 1765	N D	I	V	1765	1765	1760-9	1		
2b	3.277	...(serrifed plus with dots in corners) MERR...	Unclear	N	V				1	**Plus w. dots ⁜**	
2c	**3.279; 1.398**	T-W 1739	I D	N	S	1739	1739	1730-9	1	**Dash —**	
2c		Tho Boorne Bury Suffolk Aduice 1742	N D S L	I	S	1742	1742	1740-9	1		
2c		--- 17389	D	N	V	1738/9	1739	1730-9	1		
2c		Jonas Brown	N	I	V				1		
2c		Nat (diamond) Russell	N	I	S				1	**Diamond ◊**	
2c		J.S (backward s)	I	I	S				1	**Dot •**	
2c		JF	I	I	S				1		
2c		JB	I	I	V				1		
2c		---1741	D	N	V	1741	1741	1740-9	1		
2c		---1740---	D	N	V	1740	1740	1740-9	1		
2c		JR 1768	I D	I	V	1768	1768	1760-9	1		
2c		---RYAN 1737	N D	N	V	1737	1737	1730-9	1		Box
2c		JY 1747	I D	I	V	1747	1747	1740-9	1		Box
2c		AS 1755	I D	I	V	1755	1755	1750-9	1		Box
2c		HxK---	I	N	V				1	**X spacer**	Box
2c	3.280_	Sam? Olv/w---	N	N	V				1		
2c	**3.282; 1.408**	---1755	D	N	V	1755	1755	1750-9	1		Box
2c		---belonging to his majestys ship Tavistock	N S	N	V				1		
2c		W Whit	N	N	V				1		
2c		?PW	I	N	V				1		Box
3	1.414	WN 1782	I D	I	S	1782	1782	1780-9	1		Box
3		WG 1740	I D	I	S	1740	1740	1740-9	1		Box
3		WA---	I	N	S				1		Box
3		F(4-dotted colon)R---	I	N	S				1	**4-dot colon ⁞**	Box
3		R?D	I	I	S				1		
3		Wood Day ??---	N	N	S				1		
3		Thos. Pear.w J?	N	I	S				1		
3		WE (4E, 'W' is tilted)	I	I	S				1		
3		J Millett March Y 30 1746	N D	I	S	1746 Mar 30	1746	1740-9	1		Box
3		--- ?777 or 177?	D	N	S	177?		1770-9	1		Box
3		HR	I	I	S				1		Box
3	1.415	Blaze 1740 (Date in box)	N D	I	S	1740	1740	1740-9	1		Box
3	3.287	---1742	D	N	S	1742	1742	1740-9	1		
3	3.290_	PA	I	I	S				1		Box
3		WK 1739	I D	N	S	1739	1739	1730-9	1		
3		---Davison	N	N	S				1		
3		?T Warns	N	N	S				1		
3		TN	I	N	S				1		
3	3.293	JD/B---	I	N	V				1		Box
3	3.295	Rt X Fraser 177?	N D	N	V	177?		1770-9	1	**X spacer**	
3	3.296	? 1741(?)	D	N	V	1741	1741	1740-9	1		
3		R D	I	I	V				1		Box
3		W (diamond) S 1750 all in a heart	I D	I	V	1750	1750	1750-9	1	**Diamond ◊**	Heart

Appendix B: Research Permissions

7th June 2024

Aero O'Hanlan
Graduate Student, Department of History
East Carolina University
East 5th Street
A-316 Brewster Building
Greenville, NC
27858
USA

Dear Ms. O'Hanlan

RE: Permissions to conduct MA research on the Tank at English Harbour

The National Parks Authority of Antigua and Barbuda (NPA) is excited to partner with you in conducting archaeological investigations within Nelson's Dockyard National Park for your MA studies. This project will specifically focus on conducting data collection on the Catchment "Tank" at English Harbour and the associated graffiti in English Harbour. The field work component of this project is to happen between the 2nd of June to the 16th of June 2023.

You have represented and warranted that you have the requisite qualifications and competencies required for undertaking such archaeological investigations.

As you are aware, the wreck site is inside the boundaries of the UNESCO World Heritage Site Antigua Naval Dockyard and Related Archaeological Sites, managed by the NPA under The National Parks Act Cap 290 ("the Act"). Additionally, as you are aware, Antigua and Barbuda are signatories to the 2001 UNESCO Convention for the Protection of Underwater Cultural Heritage. Consequently, in conducting this project all parties working on site must strictly operate within and abide by the guidelines and restrictions as stipulated in the 2001 Convention and the Operational Guidelines including the Annex of the Convention.

All cultural heritage whether archaeological or not including underwater cultural heritage ("artifacts"), discovered during the authorized investigation should be catalogued or otherwise recorded *in situ* unless such disturbance or recovery is authorized in writing by the NPA.

Any artifacts discovered are part of the national heritage patrimony of Antigua and Barbuda which pursuant to the Act is under the management of the NPA. Artifacts are not to leave the dive site or the State without the express authorization of the NPA. Any artifact requiring additional conservation or analysis outside of the State will be subject a review and express authorization of the NPA. A permit by the NPA for the conduct of such analysis shall be given only on an individual and case by case basis, with the return of each and every item to Antigua and Barbuda guaranteed.

You will be required to implement and maintain proper safety measures for personal protection and the protection of the environment. Nothing in this letter shall give you the authority to act on behalf or bind the NPA or shall be construed to and shall make the NPA liable for any acts or omissions on your part or that of anyone who may be working under your direction, control or contract and you would hold the NPA harmless and indemnify it against any claims made against it as a result of any loss arising from such acts or omissions.

The NPA retains the intellectual rights to all findings and discoveries or all artifacts and cultural property. All reports, documents, articles, chapters, books, film, or other media must acknowledge the NPA as a partner institution and the NPA must be advised of such in advance of publication. The commercial use and exploitation of any results, data, information, or material whatsoever in relation to any archaeology and its environs is absolutely prohibited without the written permission of the NPA and such authorization shall be subject to a profit-sharing agreement, the terms of which are to be agreed upon between the parties.

This authorization letter is specific environs designated within the Scope of Work appended below and within English Harbour and does not give any rights or authorization to conduct investigations, to search for, explore, interfere with, displace or remove cultural heritage of an archaeological character or otherwise including underwater cultural heritage, of any other shipwreck site in or about the State of Antigua and Barbuda or any further rights in respect or any other cultural heritage in the State.

The Heritage Department of the NPA will be the direct contact between the NPA and the project. Kindly sign in the space provided below to indicate your acknowledgement, understanding and agreement of the terms attendant on this project and return to us for our records.

We look forward to the successful execution of this project.

Sincerely,

.....

Ann Marie Martin
Parks Commissioner
NPA

signed: Aero O'Hanlon

Aero O'Hanlon

9/6/2023

(Note that the date should state '2023', not '2024')