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Evan. T. Jones, 'Charting the world of English fishermen in early modern Iceland (eprint)'

The following Eprint is the final pre-publication draft of:

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The text given below is almost identical to that found in *Mariner's Mirror*. It has been produced here following requests by people who do not have easy access to this journal. Any differences between the article below and the formally published version are the result of minor editorial corrections / amendments by the journal editors.

Between the late-fifteenth and seventeenth centuries, England operated a major cod and ling fishery off Iceland. The English fishermen, who came almost entirely from Norfolk and Suffolk, visited Iceland each summer for a voyage that could last up to six months. They came in ships of 30-100 tons burden each crewed by 20-40 men.<sup>1</sup> The fish were caught using hand-lines and then salted in the hold of the vessels. Once the fishermen had returned from the voyage, they would sell their fish at the East Coast towns, such as Lynn, Ipswich and London. The fish was then traded as far inland as Oxford and Coventry.

Although historians have often overlooked the importance of this fishery, or even failed to recognise its existence, contemporaries acknowledged its value, both as a provider of foodstuff to the nation and as a supplier of skilled seamen to the navy.<sup>2</sup> That they should have recognised its worth is unsurprising, for by 1528 a total of 149 vessels were engaged in the Iceland fishery, accounting for about a fifth of England's *total* shipping tonnage.<sup>3</sup> Since manning levels were considerably higher on these fishing vessels than on contemporary merchantmen, it seems likely that between a quarter and a third of England's mariners must have accompanied this single expedition.<sup>4</sup>

In the latter part of the sixteenth century the Iceland fishery underwent a decline, with no more than forty to seventy ships making the voyage each year.<sup>5</sup> However, by the start of the seventeenth century, rising food prices, combined with a general improvement in England's maritime position, led to a resurgence in the fishery. By 1614 it was said that the Iceland fleet contained 125 vessels and by 1628 it had increased to 160 ships. Such was the growth in the industry that, in 1632, one commentator was able to claim confidently that Iceland 'is the greatest fishing in the Kingdom and exceedeth the Newfownd Land and hering fishings'.<sup>6</sup>

Despite the fishery's undoubted success in the first decades of the seventeenth century, the ascendancy of the Iceland venture proved short-lived. The fishery suffered from the maritime lawlessness that accompanied the Civil War and after the Restoration it went into terminal decline. In 1559 seventy-seven ships went to Iceland, by 1668 the fleet had shrunk to thirty-nine and by 1675 it was down to twenty-eight. In 1702 it was reported that Yarmouth, the former centre for the industry, had sent no ships north during the previous two years.<sup>7</sup> Thereafter, even memories of this once great fishery gradually faded away.

Since the development and prosecution of the Iceland fishery has been discussed elsewhere, this article will not examine the fishery itself in further detail.<sup>8</sup> Rather, the purpose of this paper is to reconstruct the basic geography of the English fishermen's world, by identifying the places they knew and named along the Icelandic coast. In doing so, this article will hope to achieve three things. First, it will introduce a world that would have been familiar to a substantial portion of England's early modern mariners. Second, it will fill in a gap left by the compilers of England's early sea atlases and, in so doing, will enable future researchers to locate places mentioned in records that relate to the English fishery. Third, by examining the place names used by the English fishermen the article will throw additional light on the nature of their involvement with Iceland.

That it should be necessary to reconstruct an English chart of early modern Iceland may seem surprising, given that the sea charts of the European core had become quite sophisticated by the late seventeenth century. Nevertheless, it is a task that needs to be undertaken, since even the best Dutch charts of Iceland lack the detail and accuracy of those of the North Sea or Baltic.<sup>9</sup> Moreover, it appears that the English fishermen did not attempt to chart Iceland themselves, relying for navigation on the personal experience of

their crews. As a result, only one contemporary mapmaker provides charts that include English names for features of the Icelandic coast and, as will be seen, his charts are often wildly inaccurate, with major coastal features being located up to 80 miles away from their true location.<sup>10</sup>

The main printed sources for this article are two charts published under the name of John Seller (1671 and 1732) and a little-known account of the English Icelandic fishery, written by John Collins (1682).<sup>11</sup> While Collins' book only details the location of a few major landmarks, Seller's charts appear, at first sight, to be of much greater use. This is because his charts, published in The English Pilot, include a large number of English place names for features of the Icelandic coast. Of these his 'General Chart of the Northerne Navigation' is the most valuable, since it provides thirty-three 'English' names of Icelandic features. In later editions of the English Pilot, this chart is replaced by 'The Generall Chart of the Northern Seas' and / or 'The Northern Navigation According to Mr Wrights Projection commonly called Mercators Chart'.<sup>12</sup> Since the 'The Generall Chart of the Northern Seas' includes nine place names not mentioned in Seller's original chart, it is also examined here.<sup>13</sup>

When considering Seller's charts it must first be appreciated that his maps of Iceland are not objects of his own invention. The two reproduced here are copies of a 1634 map by the Dutchman Joris Carolus, on to which Seller superimposed English names.<sup>14</sup> While Seller identifies some coastal features correctly, such as the Westmorny Isles and Langeness, many others are located in the wrong places. For instance, Seller suggests that the 'Ragg' (or Rogge) was the peninsula known today as Skagaheiði. Yet both John Collins' description of Iceland and the Marigold Journal, which will be discussed below, make it abundantly clear that the Ragg was in fact (Horn / Nord Cap), 70 miles northwest of Skagaheiði.<sup>15</sup> Despite such inaccuracies, Seller's maps remain useful, since they include places not mentioned in other sources. Moreover, they usually get the order in which features appear along the Icelandic coast correct, even when they gets their precise location wrong. For these reasons copies of Seller's charts are provided below (**Fig. 1 & 2**).

Unpublished sources that mention English names in Iceland include court cases, official reports and letters from naval convoy captains during time of war. For this study the most useful source is a surviving journal of a Commonwealth naval ship, the Marigold, written by an English captain during the First Dutch War (1652-4).<sup>16</sup> This journal details the activities of the ship during the summer of 1654, when the Marigold escorted the English fishing fleet to Iceland. Over the course of the summer, the ship sailed round half the coast of Iceland from 'Ingey' to the 'Ragg'. From the captain's meticulous daily records, which include numerous observations and bearings taken on key features of the coast, it is possible to identify the precise location of about twenty places. The records are particularly detailed for the northwestern peninsula of Iceland, off which most of the English fleet congregated that summer.

The names the fishermen gave to coastal features can be divided into two groups: those of indigenous origin and those that are descriptive. There are no names that are obviously honorific, whereby a locale is named after an individual, an event, or a place back home. This is probably because the fishermen who developed Iceland's fisheries came from humble backgrounds. Unlike state-backed explorers, such men lacked the motivation or ability to commemorate their achievements by stamping an identity on a place they had 'discovered'.

Of the fifty-two place names in the accompanying glossary about two-thirds were of indigenous origin. In some cases the fishermen stuck quite closely to the Icelandic name. For instance, Oxinford is derived from Öxarfjörður, Blackness from Blakknes and the isle of Grinse from Grímsey. Where names were adapted to a greater extent, the main changes were that the ‘fjörður’ endings, signifying a fjord, tend to be replaced with ‘far’, ‘Sound’ or ‘Bay’. For instance, Dýrafjörður became Derifar, Hafnarfjörður became Hafner Sound and Hornafjörður became Hornbay. In a similar vein, some ‘nes’ endings, signifying a cape, transmuted to ‘point’; Akranes, for example, became Alcrapoint. It appears, however, that the fishermen usually avoided the mariner’s habit of replacing a foreign name with a compound word that just happened to sound a bit like the indigenous name. This practice was common in this era. For example, Dutch mariners changed ‘Tour d’Ordre’ near Boulogne to ‘Doudeman’ (meaning ‘the Old Man’), while the seventeenth century English fishermen off Newfoundland converted the Portuguese derived ‘Farilham’ (‘a steep rock’ or ‘reef’) to Ferryland.<sup>17</sup> By contrast, the early modern English fishermen off Iceland appear to have done something similar in only one instance. This was their, perhaps understandable, conversion of the fjord of ‘Pikhol’ to Pighole. It therefore appears that the early modern English fishermen treated the Icelandic language with marginally greater respect than their twentieth-century counterparts, who, in common parlance, referred to Höfði as ‘The Hoof’ and Reykjaneshyrna as ‘Ricochet Corner’.<sup>18</sup>

While most names used by the English fishermen have Icelandic origins, some were applied in a more general, or more specific, way than the Icelandic names they were derived from. For example, ‘Ingey’ appears to be derived from Ingólfshöfði (literally Ingólf’s Headland). This lies to the south of Vatnajökull, a great glaciated mountain range in southeast Iceland. The English fishermen, however, took the name of the headland and applied it to the whole massif – all three thousand square miles of it. At the other end of the scale, it seems that for the English fishermen ‘The Rook’ applied only to the westerly cape of the Reykjanes peninsula (where Reykjavík is located), rather than to the peninsula as a whole.

Of the descriptive names the English used, most, such as ‘Pudding Hill’, ‘Snow Hill’ and the ‘Gannet Isles’, are of obvious derivation. ‘Snow Hill’ for example, is a prominent glaciated mountain which marks the end of the Snæfellsnes peninsula, while the ‘Gannet Isles’ are still famed for their possession of the World’s largest gannet colony. In other cases, however, the origins or meanings of the names require explanation. The ‘Merchant’s Foreland’ was probably named because this mountain was a useful landmark, visible far out to sea, for the English merchants who started visiting Iceland in the fifteenth century. Organ Bay was almost certainly named after the ‘organ ling’, a species of fish that was prized above all others by the English fishermen. ‘Kettle Bay’ might have been named for its shape, or for its high level of geothermal activity – steam coming out of the ground being a common sight in Iceland. Perhaps the most intriguing name, however, is ‘Lowsey Bay’, known to the Icelanders as Tálknafjörður. ‘Lowsey’ or ‘Lowsy’ were common early modern spellings of ‘lousy’. As today, the word could either be used in a derogatory manner or, more literally, to mean ‘infested with lice’.<sup>19</sup> While it is possible the fishermen merely wished to express their poor opinion of the bay, a genuine association with lice, or perhaps delousing, is also possible. John Collins, when he published his work about the salt fisheries in 1682, noted that the bay was particularly known for its ‘hot baths’ which ‘issues from a Rock’.<sup>20</sup> It may be therefore that the bay was called ‘lousy bay’ because the fishermen regarded as a good

place to wash their clothes, and perhaps themselves, after spending months at sea. Having said this, care must be taken with such etymological speculations, since studies of early modern place names have shown that the origins of coastal place names can be particularly difficult to determine. This is because names are often picked up and adapted by non-native speakers in unexpected ways. Bill Richardson, for example, has shown that Wolf Rock, off the coast of England, probably owes its origin to a Dutch mispronunciation of the original English name, 'The Gulf'. When the Dutch mariners pronounced the name they appear to have done so with a soft 'G'. This led Waghenaer, in his influential *De Spieghel der Zeevaert* (1584-85) to record the name as 'Die Wolff' on his charts. When Waghenaer's work was translated into English as *The Mariners Mirrour* (1588), his version of the name was retained on at least one of the charts. As a result, 'Wolf Rock' became accepted in England as an alternative name for 'The Gulf' and, in time, 'Wolf Rock' supplanted the original name from which it was derived.<sup>21</sup>

While the etymology of the place names in Iceland is not always clear, a number of things can be inferred about the nature of the fishermen's involvement with Iceland from their naming practices. In particular, the place name evidence can throw light on the conduct of the fishery, the extent of the fishermen's contact with the Icelanders and the extent to which any connection existed between the early modern English fishery off Iceland and the trawler-based industry, centred on Grimsby, which grew up in the late-nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

In terms of the conduct of the fishery, it may be noted that, since English names can be found right round the island, it is clear that the fishermen were familiar with the whole coast of Iceland. In the early sixteenth century, the English fishermen were said to have concentrated on the Westmorny Isles, to the south of Iceland. In the 1650s their main area of operations appear to have lain off the north west peninsula of Iceland.<sup>22</sup> Yet, the place-name evidence suggests that the English fishermen practiced their trade right round the island. While the fishermen may have favoured particular fishing grounds at different times, it seems unlikely that they limited their activities to just one or two parts of the coast.

Many of the names used by the fishermen relate to prominent physical landmarks, such as islands, capes and mountains. That fishermen should need to identify such features is unsurprising, for they would be vital to navigation. On the other hand, about half the names refer to coastal fjords and bays. This might seem strange, given that, by the seventeenth century, the Englishmen were forbidden from fishing within six miles of the shore, thus excluding them from almost all of Iceland's fjords. That the fishermen concentrated on offshore fishing is, moreover, supported by a 1632 English government report, which claimed that 'Our fisher men take there fish 6, 8, 10 or 20 leges of the shore. They never go nearer except fowle weather force them in for succoure.'<sup>23</sup> Yet, even if this claim were true, the place name evidence indicates that the fjords were important to the English fishermen. In part this was certainly because, as the 1632 report noted, the fjords were used as havens when the seas turned rough. On the other hand, the *Marigold Journal* indicates that the bays were also visited by the fishermen to obtain drinking water, fuel, and fresh food.<sup>24</sup> As suggested earlier, the fishermen may also have valued the bays for other facilities they could offer, such as hot water for washing.

Although short-term visits to the fjords were tolerated by the Danish overlords of Iceland, the English fishermen were forbidden from engaging in formal trade with the local people. Despite this, there is evidence that the fishermen engaged in illicit commerce with the Icelanders. For instance, in the 1630s, the King of Denmark

complained to Charles I of England that English fishermen were bringing up to twenty falconers each year to the island.<sup>25</sup> These falconers compounded with the Icelanders to catch birds of prey for sale back in England. This particularly infuriated the Danish King because the birds were a royal prerogative. In response to the Danish complaints, Charles I issued stern injunctions to his fishermen ordering them to desist from such activity. Nevertheless, even if the fishermen obeyed him, the Marigold journal indicates that small-scale trading with the Icelanders certainly continued. The fishermen, after all, could easily supply the Icelanders with wares that were cheap in England but expensive in Iceland. Such wares ranged from manufactured items, such as cloth and metal goods, to victuals, such as wheat and beer. The Icelanders, for their part, could supply goods and services that the fishermen could not obtain elsewhere. While the full extent of this commerce is unknown, the place names evidence suggests that there may well have been more frequent and regular contact between the English fishermen and the Icelanders than was acknowledged by the political masters of either. This would help to explain the high proportion of place names that refer to fjords and the fact that most of the English names for the fjords were derived from Icelandic names.

By at least the seventeenth century the Englishmen who fished Iceland's waters had developed their own nomenclature to describe the coasts, islands and bays of Iceland. Since the names used by Collins and Seller in the late seventeenth century were the same as those used by the Captain of the Marigold in 1654, it is clear that this nomenclature became well established throughout the English fishing community. None of the names used by the early modern mariners appear, however, to have survived into the modern era. When the modern English fishery was established in the late nineteenth century, the fishermen who worked off Iceland used an entirely different set of names. For names of the coastline, the modern fishermen relied on the names found on Danish charts. Although, as noted earlier, the Englishmen did sometimes take liberties with Icelandic names, they did not try to develop their own names to describe the coasts. In so far as they developed their own nomenclature, it was therefore limited to the identification of trawling grounds around the island. These were not marked on official charts and, indeed, the English fishermen often kept the exact location of these grounds secret, to prevent their rivals from profiting from their knowledge.<sup>26</sup>

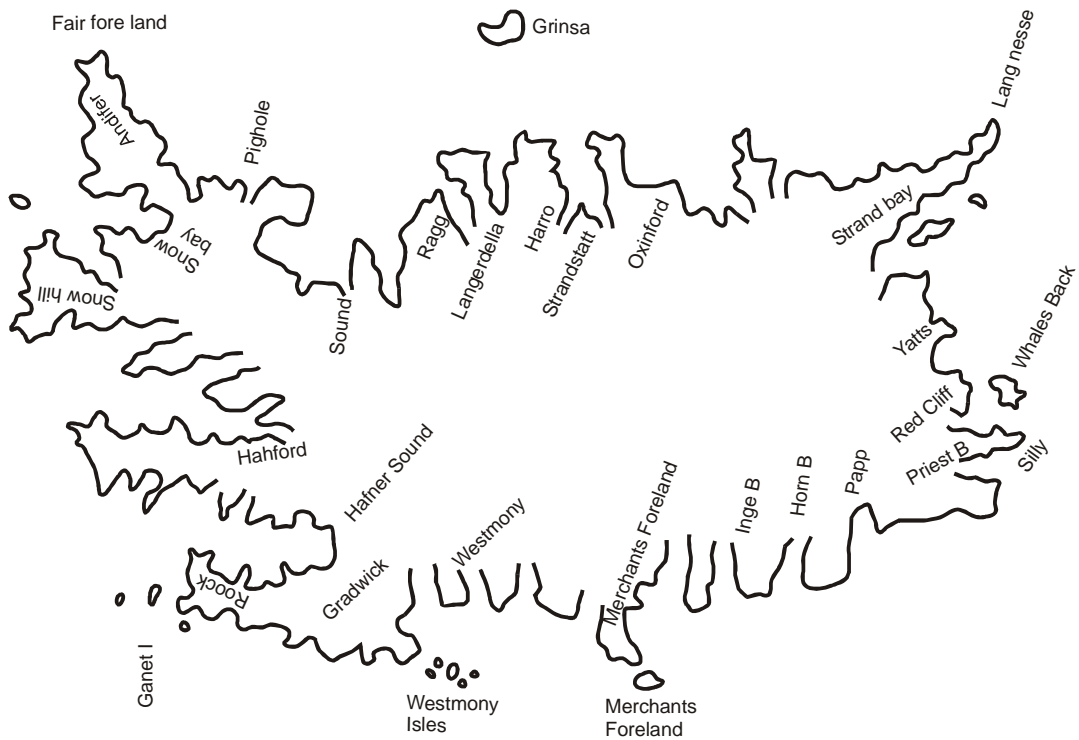
That the place names used by the early modern fishermen failed to survive into the modern period suggests that there was a total discontinuity between the early modern and the modern industries. By the time the trawler-based fishery began in the later nineteenth century, all memory of the former fishery, together with the place names the seventeenth century fishermen had used, had disappeared.

Having detailed the sources used to construct the 'corrected' chart of Iceland and discussed what the place-name evidence reveals about the fishery, all that remains is to present the chart itself (**Fig. 3**) which can be compared to Seller's charts (**Fig. 1 & 2**). The charts are followed by a glossary, which details the evidence for the location of the places mentioned in both Seller's charts and other contemporary sources. The glossary also contains some navigational information and topographic details about the places under discussion.

**Fig. 1:** Detail from 'A Generall Chart of the Northerne Navigation', 1671<sup>27</sup>

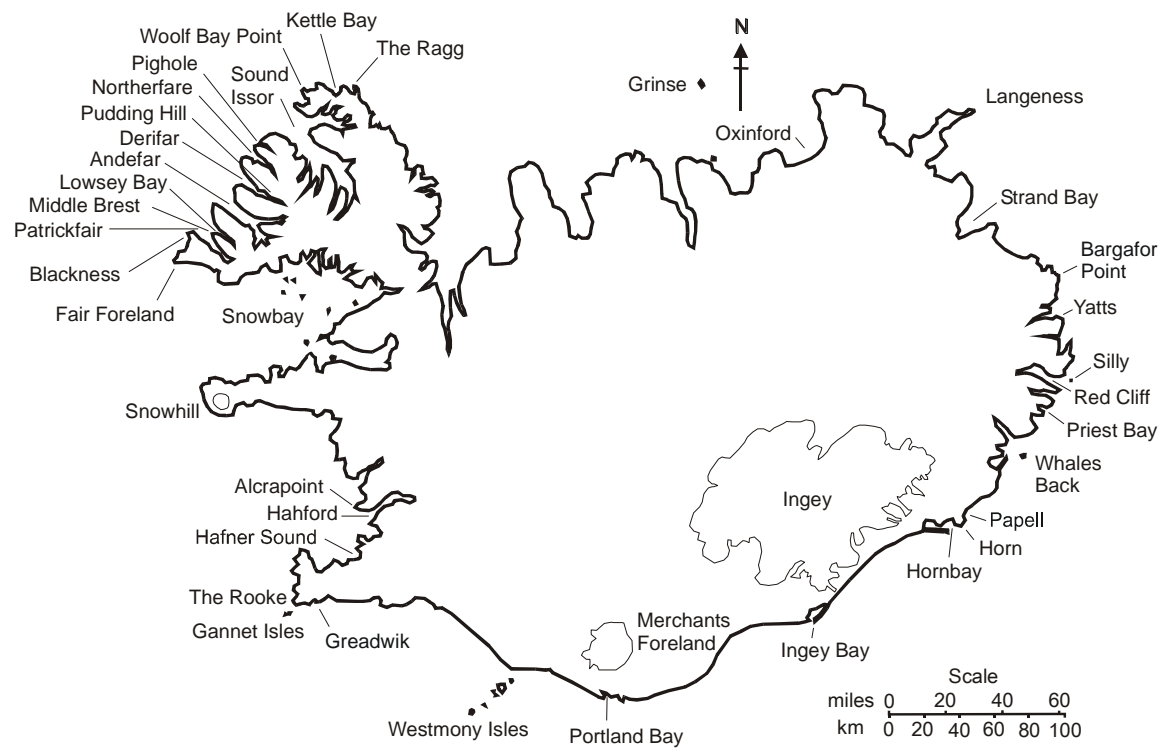


**Fig. 2:** Detail from 'A Generall Chart of the Northern Seas', 1732<sup>28</sup>





**Fig. 3:** Chart of Iceland, based on early-modern sources.



## *Glossary of Place Names*

Note: All references to the Marigold Journal come from PRO, SP 18 Vol. 75, 44.

**Alcrapoint = Akranes.** Seller places 'Alcra point' between the Rook (Reykjanestá) and Snow Hill (Snæfellsjökull) (**Fig. 1**). If this is correct, it seems likely that 'Alcrapoint' was Akranes.

**Andefar = Arnarfjörður.** At noon on 29 June the Marigold was observed to be in the latitude of 65° 54', with 'Andefer' lying 11 miles SSE. Seller puts 'Andifer' c.50 miles north east of its true position (**Fig. 1 & 2**).

**Bargafor Point = ? Glettingsnes.** Seller locates this on the east coast (**Fig. 1**). It seems probable this was a cape near Borgarfjörður, the most prominent of which is Glettingsnes.

**Blackness = Blakknes (alias Straumnes).** On 9 July the Marigold anchored in Lowsey Bay (Tálknafjörður), <sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> of a mile from the shore, with 'black ness' bearing W by N.

**Briswik = ? Krísuvík.** Seller locates this to the east of Greadwick (Grindavík), (**Fig. 1**). It may be the settlement of Krísuvík.

**Cavennesa = ? Kambanes.** Seller locates this to the south of Whales Back (Papey) (**Fig. 1**). It could be the cape of Kambanes, although this lies 15 miles *north* of Papey.

**Derifar = Dýrafjörður.** On 8 June the Marigold went into the 'harbor of Derifar' to ballast the ship. On 9 June the captain noted that Derifar is 'a very good harbour', lying NW & SE. He suggests that a ship go no further than Pudding Hill (?Höfði) and observes that the water rises about 8 foot in the harbour. On 26 June the Marigold, sailing SW from Sound Issor (Ísafjarðardjúp), sighted Derifar at SE by S. However, contrary winds forced the ship to put into Norfare (Önundarfjörður). On 15 July the Marigold, sailing NE along the coast, passed Andefar (Arnarfjörður) and put into Derifar.

**Fair Foreland = Bjargtangar.** On 6 June the Marigold passed Snow Hill (Snæfellsjökull) and set a course N by W for the 'fair forland'. She passed the 'fair forland' the next day. On 21 July the Marigold, sailing south, passed Lowsey Bay (Tálknafjörður) at 2 pm and at 6 pm, the 'faire Forland' lay due east. Seller locates the 'Fair fore land' c.80 miles north east of its true position (**Fig. 2**).

**Gannet Islands = Fuglasker (alias Eldeyjar).** On 5 June the Marigold passed between the 'Gant Ilandes' and The Rooke (Reykjanestá) heading north. The captain noted that the distance between The Rook and the 'Estr Iland' (Eldey) is 'about 7 mile' (infact 7½ nautical miles). He also notes that when a ship passes between the Rook and the 'Estr Iland', 'Snow hill poynt' (Snæfellsjökull) will bear NNW. The captain's very full description of the location and appearance of the four islands (Eldey, Eldeyardrangur, Geirfugladrangur and Geirfuglasker) suggests that he fully recognised the hazard they posed to navigation. Seller correctly locates the position of the 'Ganet I.' (**Fig. 2**). Eldey is known to this day for its possession of the World's largest gannet colony.

**Greadwik / Gradwick = Grindavík.** Seller locates this between the Rook and the Westmony Isles (**Fig. 1 & 2**). It seems likely this is the fishing settlement of Grindavík.

**Grinse / Grinsa = Grímsey.** Seller correctly identifies this island (**Fig. 1 & 2**).

**Hahford = Hvalfjörður.** Seller locates this between the Rooke (Reykjanestá) and Snowhill (Snæfellsjökull). This suggests that Hahford was Hvalfjörður (**Fig. 2**).

**Harro = unknown.** Seller locates this on the north coast (**Fig. 2**). It may be Hörgá, a river that flows into Eyjafjörður.

**Hafner Sound = Hafnarfjörður.** Seller locates this on the west coast, east of the 'Rooke' (**Fig. 2**). This suggests it was Hafnarfjörður.

**Horn = Horn.** Seller locates this on the south coast of Iceland, east of Ingey (**Fig. 1**). This is presumably the Icelandic cape of the same name.

**Hornbay = Hornafjörður.** Seller locates this next to Horn (**Fig. 1 & 2**).

**Inggabay / Inge B. = Leirur.** Seller locates this next to Ingey (**Fig. 1 & 2**). It is presumably the bay Leirur, immediately to the south of Vatnajökull.

**Ingey = Vatnajökull.** John Collins states that 'Ingulf-hill' lies on the SE side of Iceland and is one of the island's '4 remarkable mountains'.<sup>29</sup>

On 1 June the Marigold sighted Iceland and noted that at noon Ingey lay 5 leagues NW. The name Ingey / Ingulf-hill is presumably derived from Ingólfshöfði (Ingolf's Headland) which lies to the south of Vatnajökull.

Seller locates 'Ingga' on the south east coast (**Fig. 1**).

**Kettle Bay = ? Hælavík Bay.** On 22 June the Marigold left the Ragg (Hornvík) with a strong easterly wind. After standing off from the shore 'Kettle Bay did bear S° by E°st of us'. This implies that Kettle Bay was immediately west of The Ragg (Hornvík).

Seller puts 'Kettlebay' 80 miles south east of its true position (**Fig. 1**).

**Langardalla / Langerdella = unknown.** Seller locates this on the north coast, to the east of the Ragg (**Fig. 1 & 2**). This may have something to do with the valley of Langidalur near Húnafljörður.

**Langeness / Lang nesse = Langanes.** Seller correctly identifies this peninsula (**Fig. 1 & 2**).

**Lowsey Bay = Tálknafjörður.** John Collins writes of Iceland, 'They have hot baths on the West Side of the Land, particularly one 17 leagues from Snow-Hill, in a Harbour called Lowys-Bay, which issues from a Rock'.<sup>30</sup> The actual distance from the summit of Snæfellsjökull to the mouth of Tálknafjörður is 54 nautical miles, i.e. 18 leagues.

On 1 July, the Marigold was lying off 'Lowsey bay' having sailed 3 leagues SW along the coast from Andefar (Arnarfjörður). On 2 July, while riding in the mouth of the bay,

the crew saw a Bremen ship sail into 'Patrickfair [Patreksfjörður] which is a harbour near Lowsey bay'. On 9 July the Marigold anchored in 'Lowsie Bay', 3/4 of a mile from the shore, with Blackness (Blakknes) bearing W by N.

**Manarse = unknown.** Seller locates this on the south east coast (**Fig. 1**). It is possible that Manarse is a corruption of Hamarsfjörður.

**Merchants Foreland = ? Mýrdalsjökull.** On 1 June the *Marigold* sighted Iceland. At noon the ship steered away W by S for 'the Marchants fore Land which is distant about 15 leges'. From 26-27 July the Marigold took bearings on the 'Merchants Forland' while leaving Iceland. The captain noted on 27 July that 'the Marchants Forland did bear N° 4 degr: Ely 15 leges'.

While a 'foreland' normally implies a major headland, there are few such promontories on the southern coast of Iceland. It therefore seems likely that the Merchants Foreland was in fact the mountain Mýrdalsjökull. This would explain how it could be sighted at a distance of 45 nautical miles.

Seller locates the 'Marchants foreland' on the centre of the southern coast (**Fig. 1 & 2**).

**Middle Brest = Tálkni.** On 9 July the Marigold entered Lowsey Bay and anchored 3/4 mile from the shore. At that point the 'midle brest' bore W-Nly, Blackness W by N and the 'N°land' NW½Nly. In this context 'N°land', or northland probably just means the north shore of Tálknafjörður. The captain notes that his position left the ship with scarcely '4 poyntes' open to the sea. Triangulating from these points suggests that the Middle Brest was Tálkni, which is a small cape lying between the two greater capes of Blakknes and Kópanes.

**Northerfare = Önundarfjörður.** On 26 June the Marigold, attempting to sail SW along the coast from Sownd Issor (Ísafjarðardjúp), noted that Derifar (Dýrafjörður) lay 4 leagues SE by S. Having made no headway during the previous 24 hours, and with a strong wind rising from the SW, the ship entered and anchored in 'Norfare'. The captain notes that 'this harbor lieth S°E & N°W° and you may ride land lockt for all windes & good Grownd to Ancor in'.

Seller locates 'Nardafar' about 60 miles from its true position (**Fig. 1**).

**Organ Bay = unknown.** In 1658 Captain Grymsdytch of the British Navy wrote from Kettle Bay (Hælavík Bay) that much of the English fishing fleet were 'in Organ Bay or neare the Ragg'.<sup>31</sup> While the exact location of this bay is unclear, the captain's certainty about the location of the fleet, suggests that Organ Bay was in the north west. It seems probable the bay was named after the Organ Ling, the most prized type of sea fish for the English fishermen of this period.

**Oxinford = Öxarfjörður.** Seller locates this on the north east coast (**Fig. 1 & 2**).

**Papell / Papp = Papafjörður.** Seller suggests this was a bay on the south east coast east of Horn Bay (Hornafjörður) (**Fig. 1 & 2**). It seems likely that this was Papafjörður, where a settlement called Papós was formerly located.

**Patrickfair = Patreksfjörður.** On 2 July, with the Marigold anchored in Lowsey Bay (Tálknafjörður), one of the King of Denmark's ships sailed into 'Patrickfair' 'which is a harbor near Lowsey bay '.

**Pighole / Righole = Súgandafjörður.** Seller puts this between Sound Issor and Northerfare (**Fig. 1 & 2**). This would make it Súgandafjörður, which was formerly known as Pikhhol.

**Portland Bay = Dyrhólaey (alias Portland).** On 3 June the Marigold sailing west along the south coast of Iceland noted that it reached 'Portland bay' and that 'this land in portland Bay is lowe land & it makes in hummocks & there is a great fresh comes down the mountains when the snow meltes and runs into the sea'. (Note: A 'Fresh' is a rush of melt / storm water that carries sediment far out into the sea during an ebb tide). Seller locates Portland bay on the centre of the southern coast (**Fig. 1**).

**Priest Bay = Stöðvarfjörður.** Seller locates 'Priest B' on the south east coast (**Fig. 2**). An early modern Icelandic report notes that when the Englishman, Captain George Hutchinson, of the Providentia visited Stöðvarfjörður in 1595 he referred to it as 'Pristebay'. It seems likely it was named after the Rev. Einar Sigurðsson of the parish of Eydalir (d. 1626).<sup>32</sup>

**Pudding Hill = ? Höfði.** On 9 June the captain of the Marigold, commenting on the harbour of Derifar (Dýrafjörður), suggests that a ship go no further than 'pudding hill'. Since the term 'pudding' implies steep sides and a flat top, it seems likely that the hill is Höfði, which would be a prominent feature to a sailor in the lower part of Dýrafjörður.

**Ragg = Hornvík.** John Collins states of Iceland that 'the most Norwardly part is Ragg-Point in Latitude 66 0 5'.<sup>33</sup> It is in fact about 66° 28'.

At noon on 15 June the Marigold was 3 leagues out of Sownd Isor (Ísafjarðardjúp) sailing NE. That afternoon a strong WSW wind sent the ship eastward so that by midnight the Ragg was 5 leagues SSE. By noon on 18 June the ship was observed to be in the latitude of 66 degrees 30 minutes, which would put it a few miles north of NW Iceland's northernmost capes. That afternoon the ship sailed into the Ragg, to avoid sea ice. On 20 June the captain of the Marigold climbed one of the 'very high mountains' flanking the bay (possibly Dögunarfell, 542m), so he could examine the Ice pack that threatened from the north and east. He noted that the Ice stretched close along the shore to the SE. This implies that the cape to the east of The Ragg (i.e. Ragg Point) was the most easterly of the northern capes. This would make it Horn, alias Nord Cap. The Ragg itself would thus be the bay now known as Hornvík.

Seller puts the 'Rogge' / 'Ragg' c.70 miles south east of its true position (**Fig. 1**).

In early modern English a ragg / rag could refer to a rough, uneven, stone or rock.<sup>34</sup> It is presumably from this that the name is derived.

**Ragg Point = Horn (alias Nord Cap).** See entry for 'Ragg'.

**Red Cliff = Reyðarfjall or Rauðafell.** Seller locates this on the east coast (**Fig. 2**). It seems likely that this was Reyðarfjall or Rauðafell, located in Reyðarfjörður. Although

Reyður literally means ‘river trout’, it is etymologically related to rauður (red). The bay is called Röde Fiord (The Red Fjord) on one nineteenth century Danish map.<sup>35</sup>

**Rook = Reykjanestá.** From the notes made by captain of the Marigold it appears he thought of 'The Rooke' as the cape of Reykjanestá. On 5 June the ship passed between the Rooke and the Gannet Isles (Fuglasker). The captain notes that when a ship passes between 'the Rooke' and the easternmost of the Gannet Islands (Eldey), then 'Snow hill poynt' (the summit of Snæfellsjökull) will bear NNW.

On 23 July the Marigold the captain noted that when the easternmost of the two Gannet Isles (Eldey and Eldeyjardrangur) 'were both in one [i.e. in line] then the rook did bear E°N°E°'.

Seller correctly locates the ‘Rook’ on his charts (**Fig. 1 & 2**).

**Silly = Seley.** Seller locates this on the east coast (**Fig. 1 & 2**). It seems probable it is Seley, a small island east of Reyðarfjörður.

**Snowbay = ? Breiðafjörður.** Seller describes the bay to the north of Snowhill as ‘Snowbay’ (**Fig. 1 & 2**). This would suggest that ‘Snowbay’ was Breiðafjörður.

**Snowhill = Snæfellsjökull.** John Collins says that 'Snowhill' lies on the on the NNW side of Iceland and is one of the island's ‘4 remarkable mountains’.<sup>36</sup>

On 5 June the captain of the Marigold noted that when a ship passes between 'the Rooke' (Reykjanestá) and the easternmost of the Gannet Islands (Eldey), 'Snow hill poynt' will bear NNW. At noon on 5 June the easternmost of the Gannet Islands (Eldey) lay 2 leagues to the NNE of the Marigold. By noon the next day the ship had sailed due north 21 leagues and Snow hill foote lay 5 leagues further north. (Note: the distance between Eldey and Snæfellsjökull is approximately 70 nautical miles, i.e. 23 leagues).

Seller puts Snowhill 50 miles north of its true position (**Fig. 1 & 2**).

Snæfellsjökull means 'Snow mountain glacier'.

**Sound Isor = Ísafjarðardjúp.** On 15 June the Marigold, having left Derifar (Dýrafjörður), passed 'Sownd Isor' before a strong WSW wind took it on to The Ragg (Hornvík).

Seller puts ‘Sound Elzard’ c.80 miles from its true position (**Fig. 1**). This is simply marked as ‘Sound’ in **Fig. 2**.

**Sound Reall = unknown.** Seller locates this on the north east coast (**Fig. 1**).

**Strand Bay = Vopnafjörður.** Seller locates this on the north east coast (**Fig. 2**). It seems likely this was Vopnafjarðarströnd, which is commonly shortened to Strönd by Icelanders.

**Strandslatt = unknown.** Seller locates this on the north east coast, west of Oxinford (Axafjörðr) (**Fig. 1 & 2**). It may be Látraströnd, which lies on the east side of Eyjafjörður.

**Warsmina = unknown.** Seller locates this on the south coast of Iceland (**Fig. 1**).

**Westmony** (on the mainland) = **unknown**. While ‘Westmony’ is often used as a short form of the Westmony Isles in English sources, in one of Seller’s charts an area of the mainland close to the isles is identified as ‘Westmony’ (**Fig. 2**).

**Westmony Isles = Vestmannaeyjar (alias Vestemann Isles)**. Westmony was the contemporary English name for the Vestmannaeyjar (alias Vestemann Isles). Mentioned frequently in fifteenth-seventeenth century English sources, the islands are mentioned in the *Marigold Journal* on 4-5 June and 24-25 July. Seller correctly identifies the ‘Westmonia Isles’ (**Fig. 1 & 2**).

**Wetling ton = unknown**. Seller locates this in the north east of Iceland (**Fig. 1**).

**Whales Back / Whals Back = Papey**. Seller calls the island of Papey ‘Whals Back’ or ‘Whales Back’ (**Fig. 1 & 2**). It should not be confused with an island of the same name that Seller identifies as lying 120 miles east of Iceland.

**Woolf Bay Point = ? Straumnes**. On 15 June the *Marigold* sailed west from The Ragg (Hornvík).

On 16 June the captain wrote that at noon ‘wolfe bay poynt did bear S<sup>o</sup>’. The course over the next 24 hours was ENE-½ Nly and at the end of this time ‘Kettle Bay’ (?Hælavík) lay 3 leagues SE by S.

These descriptions indicate that Woolf Bay Point was one of the northern capes of the northern peninsula and that it lay to the west of Kettle Bay. Woolf Bay Point may therefore have been Straumnes, which would make Woolf Bay either Aðalvík or Rekavík.

**Yatts = Jötnar**. Seller locates this on the east coast (**Fig. 2**). It seems likely that it was Jötnar, a prominent section of the southern side of Seyðisfjörður.

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<sup>1</sup> BM Add. Mss. 34729 fo. 64.

<sup>2</sup> PRO, SP 49/2, fo. 6; SP 16/229, no. 80; Statutes of the Realm, IV, 422-28, 668-9, 1058.

<sup>33</sup> Letters and Papers, Foreign and Domestic, Henry VIII, IV, 1526-8, no. 5101. Since the mean size of the Icelandic fishing vessels at this time was 57 tons, about 8,500 tons of English shipping must have been involved: PRO, SP 1/80, fos. 61-78. In 1572, after some growth in the English marine, the total tonnage of English shipping was estimated to be 50,000 tons: R. Davis, The Rise of the English Shipping Industry in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries (London, 1962), 1.

<sup>4</sup> In the late sixteenth century, the Iceland vessels were carrying about one man for every two-and-a-half tons of capacity, while, at this time, it was said that a typical merchantman carried about one man for every five tons burden: BM Add. Mss. 34729 fo. 64; W. Salisbury, 'Early tonnage measurement in England', Mariner's Mirror, LII (1966), 47.

<sup>5</sup> Calendar of State Papers, Domestic, Elizabeth 1601-03 with Addenda 1547-65, 426; PRO SP 12/38 fos. 15-40; BM Add. Mss. 34729 fos. 63-64.

<sup>6</sup> J.R. The Trade's Increase (1615) reprinted in Harleian Miscellany, Vol. III, (London, 1809) 295, 301; Calendar of State Papers, Domestic, Charles I 1627-28, 512; PRO SP 16/229 no. 80.

<sup>7</sup> Calendar of State Papers, Commonwealth, 1659-60, 478; Calendar of State Papers, Domestic, Charles II 1667-68, 547; HMC, Hastings Mss 78, Vol. II, 327; F. Brewster, New Essays on Trade (London, 1702) 7.

<sup>8</sup> E. Jones, 'England's Icelandic fishery in the early modern period' in D.J. Starkey (ed.), England's Sea Fisheries: The Commercial Sea Fisheries of England and Wales Since 1300 (Chatham Press, 2000).

<sup>9</sup> Nordic Digital Library Centre: <http://www.bok.hi.is/kort/english.html>.

<sup>10</sup> Although charts of Iceland are included in the English versions of the Dutch sea atlases of the sixteenth-seventeenth centuries, these charts provide the Dutch versions of Icelandic names: L.J. Waghenauer, The Mariner's Mirrour (1588); W.J. Blaeu, The Sea-Mirrour (1625); W.J. Blaeu, The Sea Beacon (1643); P. Goos, The Lightning Columne or Sea Mirrour (1667); P. Goos, The Sea-Atlas or the Watter-World (1668).

<sup>11</sup> J. Seller, 'A Generall Chart of the Northerne Navigation', The English Pilot: The First Book, Northern Navigation (London, 1671), before p. 1; J. Seller, 'The Generall Chart of the Northern Seas', The English Pilot: The First Book, Northern Navigation (1732, 1752, 1767 editions), before p.1; J. Collins, Salt and Fishery (London, 1682).

<sup>12</sup> Since these charts were published after Seller's death (1697), it is unlikely that he had a hand in their making. They were, however, published in his name.

<sup>13</sup> Since 'The Northern Navigation According to Mr Wrights Projection' uses mostly Dutch names it adds little to this study. It is thus not considered further here.

<sup>14</sup> N.E. Nørlund, Islands Kortlægning: En Historisk Fremstilling (Copenhagen, 1944), plate 30.

<sup>15</sup> See Glossary.

<sup>16</sup> PRO, SP 18 Vol. 75, 44. An edited version of this journal is to be published in a forthcoming 'Miscellany' volume of the Navy Record Society. A complete transcription of the journal can be downloaded from: <http://www.bris.ac.uk/Depts/History/Maritime/1654marigold.pdf>.

<sup>17</sup> W.A.R. Richardson, 'Lyonesse and The Wolf: A case study in place-name corruption', Journal of the English Place-Name Society, 24 (1991-2), 22; W.B. Hamilton, Place Names of Atlantic Canada (Toronto, 1996), 201.

<sup>18</sup> A L Binns, 'Hull fishermen's place-names', Nomina, 5 (1981), 22-26.

<sup>19</sup> Oxford English Dictionary.

<sup>20</sup> Collins, Salt and Fishery, 78.



- <sup>21</sup> W.A.R. Richardson, 'Lyonesse and The Wolf: A case study in place-name corruption', Journal of the English Place-Name Society, 24 (1991-2). See also, W.A.R. Richardson, 'Coastal place-name enigmas on early charts and in sailing directions', Journal of the English Place-Name Society, 29 (1996-7).
- <sup>22</sup> Jones, 'England's Icelandic fishery', 108.
- <sup>23</sup> 'Concerning the Fishing of Island', PRO SP 16/229 no. 80.
- <sup>24</sup> Jones, 'England's Icelandic fishery', 108-9.
- <sup>25</sup> PRO S.P. 16/229 No. 80.
- <sup>26</sup> A L Binns, 'Hull fishermen's place-names, Nomina, 5 (1981), 25.
- <sup>27</sup> J. Seller, 'A Generall Chart of the Northerne Navigation', The English Pilot: The First Book, Northern Navigation (London, 1671), before page 1.
- <sup>28</sup> J. Seller, 'A Generall Chart of the Northern Seas', Northern Navigation (1732, 1752, 1767 editions), before page 1.
- <sup>29</sup> Collins, Salt and Fishery, 76.
- <sup>30</sup> Collins, Salt and Fishery, 78.
- <sup>31</sup> PRO, SP 18 191/65, fo. 120.
- <sup>32</sup> Helgi Þorláksson, Sjórán og siglingar : ensk-íslensk samskipti 1580- 1630 (Reykjavík, 1999), 65.
- <sup>33</sup> Collins, Salt and Fishery, 75.
- <sup>34</sup> Oxford English Dictionary.
- <sup>35</sup> Voxende Kaart over den östlige Kyst af Jisland fra Mulehavn i Hierads-Floin-Bugt til Jngolfs-Höfde-Huk (Copenhagen, 1824).
- <sup>36</sup> Collins, Salt and Fishery, 76.