

WILLIAM BUSH — THE FLYING BOATMAN

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INTRODUCTION

In the summer of 1607, a gentleman travelled from Lambourn to London. His route can still be traced. He began his journey on July 20th and reached his destination four weeks later. He travelled the whole way in a single conveyance, a small wooden boat, replete with guns, rigging and flags, which could be adapted, rather oddly, as a tricycle or a flying machine. In this article we present a contemporary account of his mission.

William Bush's travels were reported in the following year. The author, who abbreviates himself A. N., was the writer and plagiarist Anthony Nixon, who was active in the early part of the seventeenth century. His output also includes a poem addressed to Archbishop Whitgift, a pamphlet on Swedish politics and a piece entitled "The Foot Post of Dover with his Pocket Stuffed Full of Many Strange and Merry Petitions". Another work, "Oxford's Triumph", suggests that he knew the locality. Like his other publications, this account of Mr. Bush's adventure was printed by Nathaniel Butter.

The tone is of rather dour eulogy. Mr. Bush's achievement is compared to the rounding of both the Cape of Good Hope and the North West Passage; the deity is invoked and at least one miracle is claimed. The style is rather ragged and the narrative is frequently interrupted by lengths of philosophical platitude. The author cannot conceal his loathing of the mob, but compensates by his devotion to the hero's well-born admirers.

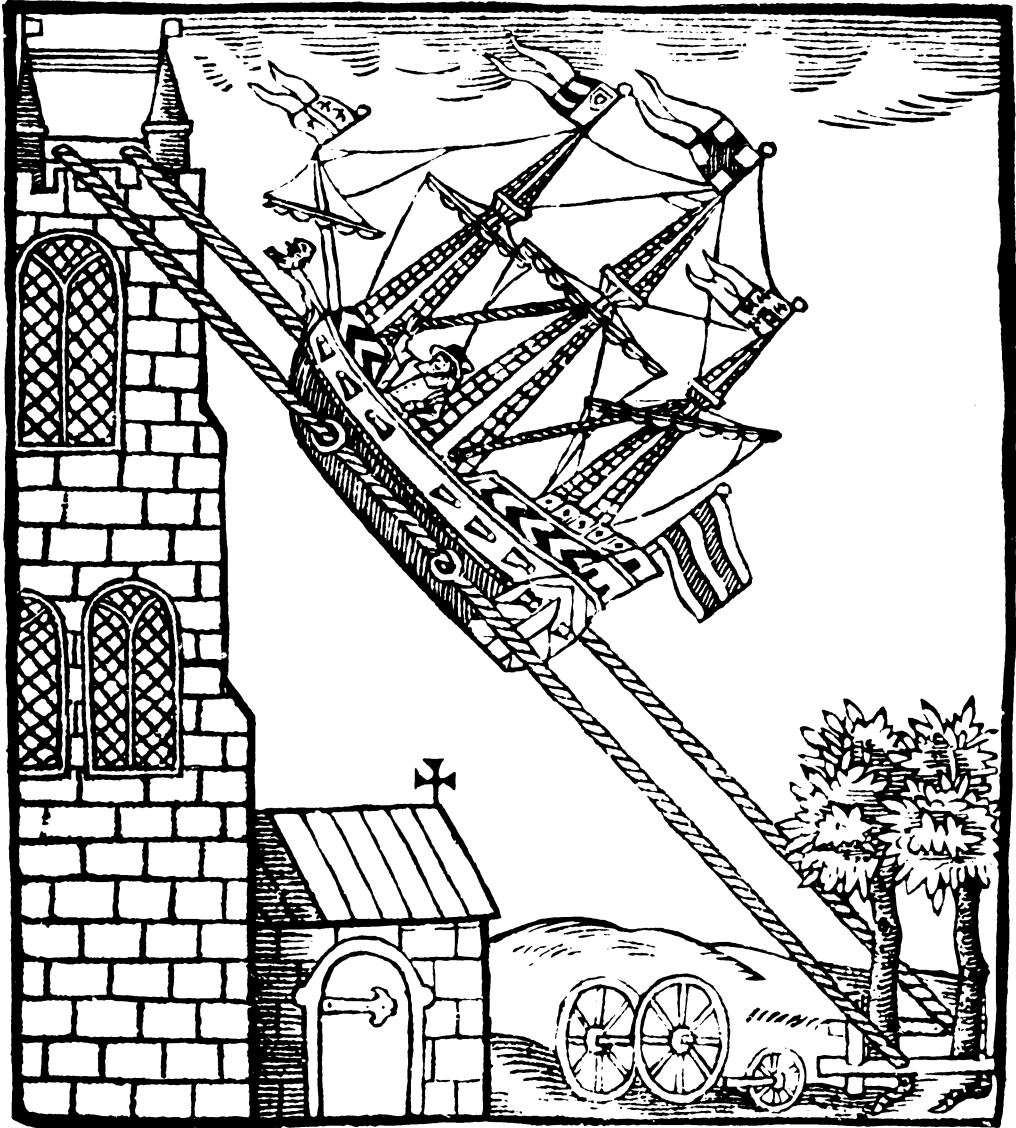
Despite his chronicler's efforts, the de-

tails of Mr. Bush's machine are hard to decipher. Clearly, its ascent of Lambourn church was achieved by some form of winch, while its progress across the Berkshire Downs may have involved the use of pedals or cranks. It rode, when it rode at all, on three large wheels, with a fourth performing some unspecified task inside. Mr. Bush also practised the "concealed art for swift speed in running", but nowhere is this explained. The wheels could be detached and normally were removed before the vessel took to the water. Once on the Thames, a pair of oars sufficed. These mechanical marvels were supplemented by twelve small cannons and by fireworks. The woodcut on Nixon's title page (Fig. 1) suggests a scaled down warship about 12 feet long.

It is not easy to check the details of this traveller's tale. The author insists on the literal truth of every incident and claims several thousand witnesses, as well as documentary proof. Unfortunately, the records of this period held by the Customs House perished in the Great Fire of London and the Lambourn churchwardens' accounts are no longer extant. The parish register merely suggests that the protagonist did not live there. The church tower has been extensively restored since the seventeenth century and no trace can be found of the havoc caused by Mr. Bush's flight. Footman, however, did record appropriate traces of damage and reconstruction which were visible in the nineteenth century, and links these with the trail of the flying boatman.¹

With the exception of Master Harrison at Brentford, all the supporting characters

A true Relation of the Trauels of M. Bush,
a Gentleman : who with his owne handes without
any other mans helpe made a Pynace, in which hee past by
Ayre, Land, and Water : From Lamborne, a place in Bark-shire,
to the Custome house Key in London. 1607



London printed by .P. for Nathaniel Better, 1608.

Figure 1. The title page of Anthony Nixon's account of the journey.

mentioned by name can be traced and did live at the right time. There seem to be links between them which lend some colour to this tale. William Essex of Lambourn seems to have been a moving spirit in the venture. In fact the journey began from his home near the church. He may even have been the organiser of this stunt, for he contrived to acquire an extensive inheritance, which he is known to have wasted entirely. In 1607 he would have been about thirty. Mr. Bush flew the colours of two other families when he started up the tower. The Waynemans, or Wenmans, were an Oxfordshire family from Carswell, near Witney. Francis Wenman's widow was married to Sir Charles Manners, whom Mr. Bush visited at Hampton Court. The Harcourts were a more famous Oxfordshire family and William Essex was married to Sir Walter Harcourt's daughter, Jane. It may be of interest that another member of the family, Robert Harcourt, who was almost the same age as William Essex, did become a sailor and explorer. Two years after Mr. Bush's adventure, he explored the coast of Guiana, where the inhabitants mistook him for Sir Walter Raleigh. The other characters are documented in the notes. Only Mr. Bush remains elusive.

Almost all the places mentioned in the pamphlet have been traced and in general the distances between them do seem to be correct. Even Mr. Bush's hosts seem to have lived in the right places at the right time. The basic outline of the route is mapped in figure 2.

Although Nixon was keen to enlist Mr. Bush among the great voyagers of the day, a small town Frobisher with good connections, the actual literary genre is quite different. In the period around 1600 there seems to have been a fashion for pamphlets describing strange or ridiculous journeys, and for a while prospective authors would organise such trips themselves for the express purpose of describing them in print. Perhaps the most famous of these

ventures was Will Kemp's jig from London to Norwich. It seems more than likely that Mr. Bush was another contributor to the genre.

The text which follows is a slightly abridged version of Nixon's original. A few passages of irrelevant rhetoric have been omitted, and the introduction has been rearranged. Otherwise the narrative is complete. Apart from place names, the spelling has been modernised. Notes on the personalities and places will be found at the end of this paper.

A true Relation of the Travels of Mr. Bush, a Gentleman who with his own hands without any other man's help, made a Pinnace, in which he passed by Air, Land and Water from Lambourne, a place in Berkshire, to the Custom House Quay² in London 1607

To the Reader

. . . Albeit men read, as here, never so much of Cosmography or Astronomy, yet without practice and experience, it is unperfect . . . I thought good, (being entreated thereto), not to omit a most strange and well deserving labour of no less worth than wonder brought to pass by a gentleman of our own country . . .

Insomuch as such as have conferred with the skillfullest navigators of our land, with such as have been principal actors in our furtherest North East and North West discoveries; with such as have been in the South Sea, and at the Cape of Bona Speranza (*Cape of Good Hope*), could never report of such a performance as this gentlemen's, which, for rareness, hath the approbation of all man, and, for truth, the confirmation of many thousand eye witnesses. And it was thus. With a few tools or instruments and with his own hands (no man in the least measure aiding or assisting him) he framed and fashioned a Pinnace (*small vessel or warship*) by his

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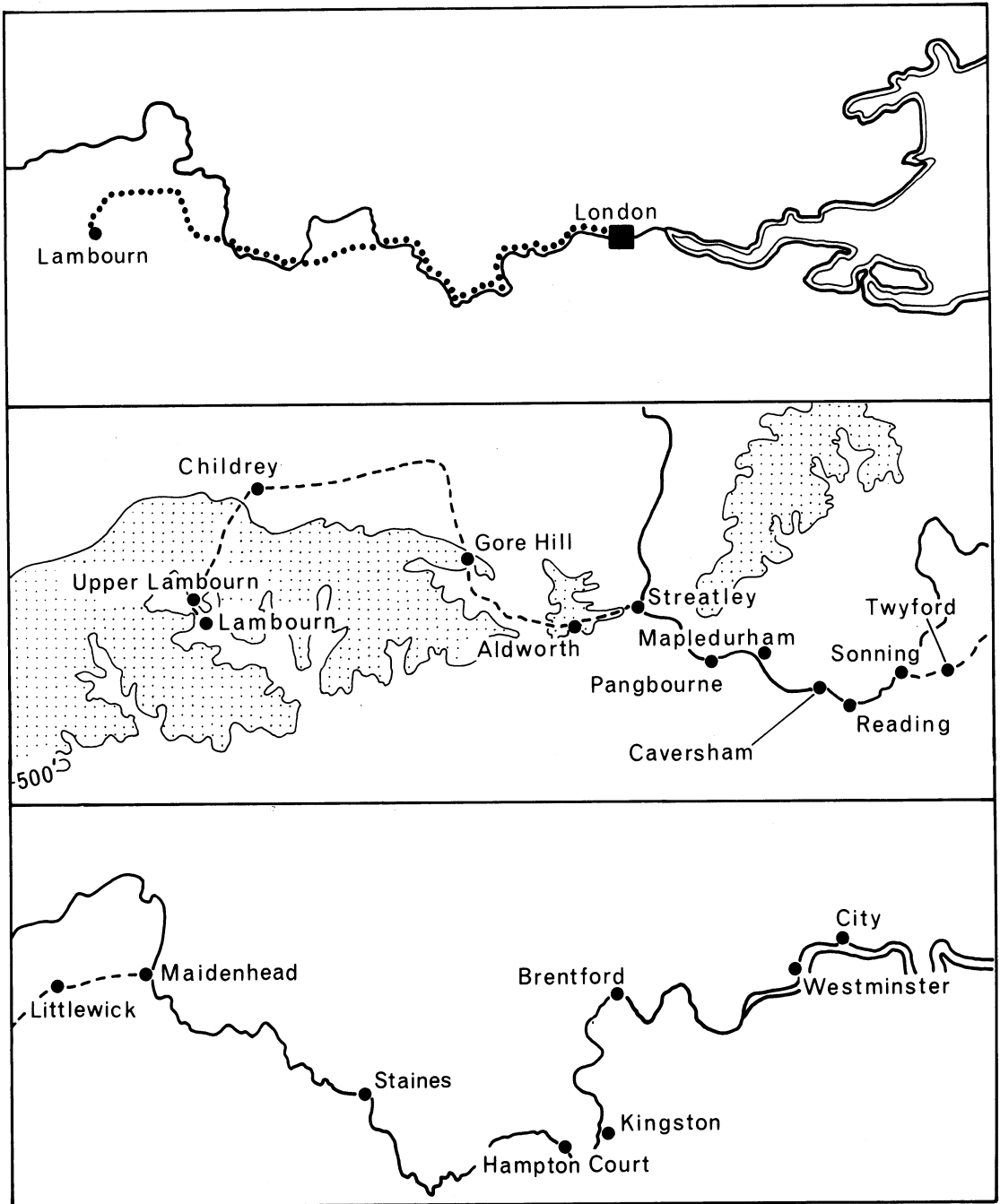


Figure 2. The route taken by William Bush. Drawing: Mark Bowden.

cunning and skill Mathematic and Geometrical, which, without the help either (of) man or beast to move the same forward, passed by Air, Land and Water, only by his own industry and labour; viz threescore yards in the air and twenty miles upon the land and an hundred miles upon the water . . . If any think that what this book speaks is very strange, he may see that the very title says as much; and it is good for an author to be as good as his title. If any think it is but a tale and no truth, I cite you my talesmaster (*protagonist*), (which is more than most men will do). And he, to avoid every such imputation, hath his confirmation hereof under the hands and seals of the chiefest of the Custom House in London, besides many thousand witnesses in the country. Then sit down and read it. If it does not profit thee, yet his trust is it shall not displease thee. A. N.

The true manner of this Pinnace's devices for her proceedings in the Air

For her passage in the Air she had two strong cables almost of threescore and five yards in length and an hundredweight apiece, strained by windlasses and other strange and unheard of devices very stiffly from the battlements of the Church Tower of Lambourne in the Country of Berks, being a tower of great height, above a hundred foot distant from the other, just the breadth of the Pinnace, to two trees in the same churchyard an hundred foot likewise distant from the tower; on which cables or ropes the Pinnace did slide with certain iron rings on either side, the same framed for that purpose, and divers other engines that caused her (by one man's strength in her), without other help, to mount up to the top of the same tower and to descend again to the ground at his pleasure; and that with great facility . . .

There was likewise a frame of timber upon the the top of the tower to which the main great cables were fastened, with

windlasses and other devices in it. Another frame also of timber was fastened deep in the earth with windlasses and other engines to strain the ropes and assist the Pinnace in moving by other devices. Two ropes turned in the windlasses upon the top of the tower and in the foresaid frame with counterpoises in pulleys to assist the motion of the Pinnace and to cause her to move by degrees either ascending or descending. Thus Art, joined with industry and labour, turns to good effect and purposes exercises of most ambiguous doubts or difficulties . . .

The manner of her proceeding by land

. . . For the Pinnace's passage by land she had four wheels, all made and framed by this gentleman, whereof three served to carry her and the fourth turned in her with divers other engines that caused her by one man's labour and strength to pass forward either up a hill or in deep way, and he himself in her. Her wheels were thus placed: two of them, being four foot and a half high, were set in the fore part of the Pinnace on either side one, upon a square iron axletree. The third turned in the frame of three foot high, and was fastened by devices at the hinder part of the Pinnace, directly under the stern, with which he would make such swift speed on land as many who followed to behold him and to witness with their eyes what their tongues could not conceive to be credible. So this workman, so highly commended and respected for this piece of workmanship, travelled up and down with as great a troop after him as are commonly congregated on any . . . festival assembly . . .

The manner of her proceeding by water

. . . For her passage by water she was very carefully caulked and pitched to keep the water forth. She also had a seat placed in her, just in the middle part and doubtless right opposite one against the other. She had oars likewise of an equal length and

weight to row her with, and four masts and yards of the most fine light timber that might be had or procured. She was orderly rigged with ropes and sails, and in all parts had all manner of tacklings provided for her as fit and necessary as belongeth to a ship of her burthen. She had twelve pieces of ordnance in her that went off by a strange device in just order one after the other. They were planted on a platform framed for that purpose upon the Tower deck in their equal proportion, and no man near them at their discharging. Her fore-castle was framed lower than the top by a foot; upon every top and yardarm she was garnished and set forth with flags, auncients (*small flags ending at a point*), streamers and pendants of rich Taffetie (*taffeta*), the colours sable and argent according to the colours of him that made and framed her. Her several flags were beautified with divers coats of arms, as the Arms of England, the Essex coat,³ the Harcourts⁴ and the Waynemans⁵ and the coat of the Shipwrights and his ancestors, with divers other gentlemen of worth and worship in that country . . .

The manner of the Pinnacle's travel

. . . Upon Monday, being the twentieth day of July last past, between the hours of nine and ten in the forenoon, the said Pinnacle was brought forth of the house of William Essex Esquire of Lambourne aforesaid,⁶ being near unto the church, to proceed and pass forward in her journey, viz. from the battlement of the Church Tower of Lambourne by Air, Land and Water under LONDON bridge to the Customs House Quay of the City of London, by the industry and labour of only one man that framed her. Being brought into the churchyard, she shot off her ordnance, being twelve pieces, one after another, to the wonderful admiration of the multitude of people that were assembled to behold her, for the most part of them never saw ship or pinnacle before, except it were

a few of the better sort. There the multitude of people was so great that, by reason of the throng and press amongst them, one whole hour was spent before the pinnacle could be brought to the ground platform and settled upon the cables to ascend up to the battlements of the tower.

She was no sooner set upon the cables but she ascended by degrees up into her place upon the battlements, not having any man in her, where this continued till two of the clock in the afternoon, at which time she was let off from the Tower the distance of twenty foot, to hang in the air in the full view and sight of the people there present. As she so hung in the air, her ordnance went off, and no man near her by twenty foot, with many fireworks and other strange and worthy devices to satisfy the people's expectations for that day; for the voyage was determined to begin the next day following. But the ungoverned vulgar sort of people not content with these shows (albeit they came *gratis*) began to gather together in a tumultuous and unruly head (*force*) as if they meant harm, hurt or prejudice to the work or workman, for they pretended (*claimed*) themselves not satisfied with all this except they might see one come from the top of the tower in the same boat or pinnacle; which the framer of the work perceiving . . . (he) thought good to prevent by satisfying their murmuring minds with the effect of their desires. For the author of all that business, to please the incredulous people and to fulfil the insatiety of the common sort, went up to the battlements and down again in her to the astonishment of many and to the full satisfaction and content of all, being two thousand in number at the least. And about five of the clock in the afternoon she returned into the place from whence she came.

Upon the Tuesday, the one and twentieth day of July, between the hours of twelve and one of the clock that day, this pinnacle was prepared to set forward on her

voyage, little thinking that the concourse of people had been so great as was there the day before to hinder her passage. But when she was brought forth into the churchyard, she found there the number much increased and the company as troublesome and unruly as the day past. Yet that did not let or withhold the determinate purpose of her proceeding, but with the great pains and labour of twenty men at the least that were helping, she was brought to be set upon the ropes and then rested forty feet from the ground out of the people's reach, until such time as all things were sufficiently viewed by him that was to travel in her . . . For this Adventurer having many friends (for he was very well beloved) to the number of threescore persons, men, women and children being assembled together and got upon the top of the tower contrary to his knowledge, where the platform was and where divers other ropes belonging to the pulleys and counterpoises were fastened to the main pinnacles thereof, the common multitude, little regarding and less knowing to what use they were made, some leaned, some hung and some sat upon the ropes, other some gate to the top of the pinnacles to which the ropes were fastened and stood holding the iron (whereon the same was fixed) in their hands that they might better have full sight of the coming up of the pinnacle. But as *male minus expectata graviora*, so the mischief that then suddenly befell was the more greivous by how much it was the less expected or dreamed upon. For at the first motion of the pinnacle, having her commander in her, determined to ascend towards the top of the tower, two of the main pinnacles, both with men upon them, fell down into the tower amongst the people which was there standing as thick as might be, that everyone was in great danger and hazard. But here God showed his wonderful mercy, for neither they upon the pinnacle, nor upon the ropes, nor any of them that were standing upon the leads

under the fall of the pinnacles had any harm or hurt or received any bruise by the fall thereof, although by estimation they were either of them judged 2000 weight (*a ton*).

There you might have heard a grievous stir and lamentation of the people for the suspected loss of friends, some crying for the loss of their husbands, some for the lack of wives and children, other some for their friends and kinsfolk, all greatly doubting and mistrusting that a great part of the people in the tower had by that fall been bitterly killed, or at least grievously hurt or maimed; but when a happy voice gave notice from the top of the tower that no person had sustained either loss of life or limb, or received any bruise or hurt, the people wondered at so strange a miracle and gave God the glory. Persons of the most incredulous sort remained doubtful and would not be confident of such happiness or good fortune until they might see their husbands wives and children come down and descend from the top of the tower; which was not long a doing, for every man strived to make most haste, and he thought himself most fortunate that could attain to be foremost.

All this time, he that had undertaken this journey sat ready in the Pinnacle to proceed in her and beheld all that disastrous chance which had happened. But when he saw that all was safety and that neither man, woman nor child had received the least hurt by the accident, he was much joyful for them, greatly comforted in himself and gave God hearty praises and thanks for sending consolation in such hopeless extremity . . .

After this, the Governor of the Pinnacle came forth to her and went up into the tower to be an eye witness of what happened and, finding all things sufficient and strong for his proceeding notwithstanding this misfortune, he came down cheerfully and with a resolute heart to go forward on his journey. But many of his friends, both learned preachers and others,

went about to dissuade him from this adventurous exercise, alleging his attempt too venturesome, his purpose dangerous and his presumption egregious and to be a great sin in tempting the mercy of God in so strange and unheard of manner of boldness. Who suddenly made answer that this precedent, being so wonderful and beyond hope, did more encourage and animate his proceedings than any man's persuasions could possibly prevail to the contrary; for now he felt the helping hand of his merciful God to be ready to assist him in all his actions, especially in this journey. So in the name of God he ascended to the battlements of the Tower in the Pinnacle, where, standing up, he turned to salute all his friends, and, taking them all by the hands, he sat down in the Pinnacle and by his own industry and labour let himself down by degrees to the ground to the joy and wonder of all beholders.

At the lower end of the ropes were the wheels and divers other engines provided for his travel by land, ready attending his coming down; on which wheels after some little time he placed the Pinnacle, and all the other engines in their several places, and, sitting in her, made her pass to and fro in the churchyard, as well as to see that all things should be fit and well appointed for his travel as to content the people that stood desirous to see the rest performed of that novel adventure. From thence he proceeded to the place from whence he came in the morning, being partly in his way to London; yet that small part of his journey did more fear and trouble him, by reason of the multitude of people that did so follow and pester him and the deepness and straightness (*narrowness*) of the way that did so exceedingly hinder him, that he was constrained to rest the best part of the next day from the travelling any further . . .

Upon Wednesday, the two and twentieth of July, between the hours of four and five of the clock in the afternoon, this gentle-

man enterprised by degrees to make prosecution of his travel, which, notwithstanding it was laborious unto him, yet seemed it sweet and pleasing in that his mind was led with a desire and a delight to see the performance of the same; for a firm hope and assurance of those things we love and labour to bring to pass always rouseth delight. *Spes alit agricolas*: hope nourisheth the countryman . . .

So fared it with this traveller, who, moved with this passion of hope, or rather certain persuasion of his prosperous proceeding, began now to address himself to the apt disposing of his Pinnacle and to the making of her to go upon the mainland; and so travelled from Church Lambourne to Up Lambourne,⁷ being by judgement and estimation some quarter of a mile distant the one from the other . . . And about seven of the clock in the evening of this same day he ceased from his labour for that time, and, the next day following being Thursday, he there rested and took his repose . . .

Upon the Friday, being the 24 day of July, between the hours of three and four of the clock in the afternoon, he began to travel with his boat from Up Lambourne, where he had rested, refreshed his weariness, up an exceedingly high hill towards Childerie Downs⁸, which he could hardly attain the top of but with great enforcement of pains and labour; and then descended into the next valley, the passage to which he found to be so easy that he was thereby encouraged to attempt the climbing to the top of the next hill, being far higher and steeper than the first, but that proved too difficult and full of toil to him in that travel that it was full night before he could attain to the top thereof; and his bones were so overweared and grieved with the extremity of that labour that, having then travelled a mile and a half, he was there constrained to rest and to proceed no farther but to put a deep cross into the earth where he left his boat and some

people with her that were nigh, and he with divers others returned to Lambourne where he rested.

Upon the Saturday, the five and twentieth of July, between the hours of seven and eight a clock in the morning, he began to proceed forward on his journey and travelled from the foresaid cross on Childerie Downs to the lodge of the right worshipful Sir Edmond Fettiplace,⁹ being from thence distant some two miles and a half, and there, by reason of the tempestuous weather, as extremity of lightning, thunder and rain, he was constrained to rest from passing any further and, there being about the hours of two and three of the clock in the afternoon, he ceased and left off to labour, the rain having fallen so wonderfully fast that the Pinnacle (had she been from the wheels) might have swum upon the Downs, for (the shower being ended) there was in her by estimation forty gallons of water. At that place he rested, the next being Sunday.

. . . Neither fears, misfortune nor bad weather or dampness could disanimate him or deter him from his further proceedings, but that, as before, so upon Monday, being the seven and twentieth day of July, between seven and eight of the clock in the forenoon, taking time by the forehead, and desirous not to be idle but always in action, he began to travel from Sir Edmond Fettiplace his lodge; but, by reason of the multitude of people that in a distracted desire came and followed him to behold this unheard of manner of travelling, which was a thing so incredible and strange unto them — that a Pinnacle should pass over the top of the downs — he was in some sort by the people's importunity enforced to rest and remain here three hours, after he had travelled three miles.

. . . Everyone that had been spectator of this strange enterprise caused such sustenance to be brought unto him, as either that place or their store or provision could afford him, and that in such timely manner,

that, as a shower of rain after a long drought is more worth than ten showers another time, and money lent to a merchant falling bankrupt to uphold his credit may be accorded so much money given, so the same was the more pleasing and acceptable unto him in that it was so needful by reason of the greatness of his former labour and travel. After he had well received and refreshed himself with such provision as they had plentifully bestowed upon him, he addressed his course towards Catimslow Hill¹⁰, being about a mile from the place he thus rested at, and there he took his repose that night, having travelled five miles the same day.

The next morning being Tuesday, the eight and twentieth day of July, between the hours of nine and ten of the clock in the forenoon, he decided not to go forward and proceed in his wearisome journey, finding it now very painful and irksome unto him, as well by reason of the extremity of the hot weather as by means of the infinite company of people, which greedily followed after him in such troops. Being two miles from any town or village, he was stifled and pestered for want of air; for, notwithstanding he himself many times entreated them to forbear, yet neither he, nor all his friends or followers, could prevail or persuade them to refrain from pressing so near him and the boat . . .

About two of the clock in the afternoon by a sinister accident and misfortune the chiefest key of his work brake suddenly, by which the Pinnacle was guided and governed; by reason whereof he was forced to cease going forward any further, having not travelled above a mile that day.

Upon Wednesday the nine and twentieth of July, between the hours of nine and ten of the clock in the morning, after the iron machine was mended in the day before was broken, he began to proceed from Cut-chinglow Hill upon the downs with as much speed as he might; and after he had travelled almost three miles he practised in

his boat the concealed art for swift speed in running, which he performed with unexpected admiration, for in twelve score he outran all the people twenty yards, being of men, women and children to the number of five hundred. In this day he travelled further to Alsworth Parish, to a place called Harbert's Lodge¹¹, where perforce he was constrained to rest by reason that the engine so lately mended was newly broken again, about four of the clock in the afternoon, having travelled that day five miles or better. This day he passed the highest and steepest hill, being from the foot to the top thereof by estimation a long mile.¹²

. . . Upon Thursday, the thirtieth of July, between the hours of nine and ten of the clock in the forenoon, after the remending of the said engine of iron, this industrious gentleman, no way variable in his resolution or swerving any whit from his determinable purpose, addressed himself and his course from Habert's Lodge to a place called Streatley, being some two miles distant from the lodge. To which place he came about twelve of the clock of the same day, where he rested that day and the day following, being Friday, only to calk, pitch and trim his Pinnace, because she was so marvellously shaken by the long and wearisome journey she had made upon the land, launching her forthwith into the water to make trial whether (without further reparation) she was able to endure her travel upon the water; which upon search he found so sufficient, as that her former shaking by land had not much hurt or annoyed her.

Upon Saturday, being the first of August, about twelve of the clock, this gentleman intended to commit both himself and his Pinnace to the mercy of the water, and very early in the morning prepared divers weights and put them into her, so by the greatness of the weights caused the Pinnace to sink under the water, to enable her by the fuelling of the timber and planks

to defend any breach that might happen by her going upon the water in that journey, and that with more speed and safety he might arrive at his determined voyage, being in good hope he might receive less damage upon the water than he had sustained upon the land. This done, he thought himself in such security as if he did *in portu navigare* (*sail in harbour*). But it fell out clean contrary, for a company of rude persons, being bargemen (a kind of people by nature and education immoderate, barbarous and uncivil), wading in the water to the Pinnacle with great violence, haled (*dragged*) and pulled her up and down as if they intended nothing else but to have shaken her asunder; which, when the commander of her heard of and perceived, with what kind and mild speeches and entreaties as he could persuaded them to desist from their rude and uncivil manner of behaviour. But all prevailed not, they were so far from leaving of(f) to continue these wrongs and injuries, as they returned wild and uncivil speeches to the gentleman; and, not contented with that, their company increased to the number of ten or twelve persons, all bargemen, some with long pike staves, some with long hooks and other weapons, and barbarously assaulted this distressed voyager, having but two men with him, attendants in his company, who were both grievously wounded, and that in their heads and other places by these riotous persons; for these rude fellows were not satisfied, neither for the abuse offered to himself, nor the hurts done to his men, but they manifested their further cankered stomachs and malice (after the hurt men were retired into their lodgings for safeguard of their lives) and went into the Pinnacle where they had left her and with great stones, hooked staves and other weapons maliciously rent and spoiled her and beat great holes through her, not forbearing to continue this violence and outrage until they thought they had sufficiently torn her travelling any more,

either by land or water . . .

This was a great overthrow and hindrance to this traveller's voyage and might have been his utter undoing if their devilish purposes had taken their full effects. For this misfortune he was constrained to stay at Streatley Saturday, Sunday and part of Monday, as well as to cure and recover his men as to repair his boat, which (God be thanked) were both reasonably well performed by the Monday following, so that by this time his men were somewhat recovered and enabled in the afternoon to pass in a boat, which he had hired of purpose, to carry them four miles a day, as they were able to endure the air, with drums and sorts of music, by which he himself and his men received much consolation and comfort.

The first, second or last occasions of fear did not cause him to distrust of hopeful end; . . . and so upon Monday, being the third of August, between the hours of one and two of the clock in the afternoon, he began to travel by water at the place where he left the Thursday at his coming thither; for his Pinnace was waterbourne, being upon wheels, as she travelled upon the land. From thence he directed his course from Streatley to Pangbornelock, being distant from Streatley by water four miles, and, coming thither about five of the clock, rested there that day.

Upon Tuesday, being the fourth of August, between the hours of eight and nine of the clock in the afternoon, he proceeded forward on his journey and passed from the place where he left the night before over the banks of the said lock upon his water wheels into the water on the other side of the lock until he was waterbourne, and then he cast the wheels with other devices from him and, so being clear in the water, rowed with his oars, going softly forwards until he came to Maple Durham Lock, being distant from Pangbornelock some three miles, where he came ashore in his boat again upon the

wheels and passed through a long wood wharf, there by land a very deep and troublesome passage; which was so painful by reason of the bad way and the extremity of heat that the people (being very many of the better sort) pitied him much and were very sorry for his painful labour . . .

After he had retired himself about two hours and well recreated and refreshed his body at Sir Michael Blunte's¹³, he prepared to proceed forward, passing in the boat upon the wheels below the lock into the water, and, when he was waterbourne again, he cast the wheels from him and passed forward with his oars towards Reading lock. Unto which place before he came, he might descry (*see*) afar off a whole army of people upon Cavshum bridge¹⁴, upon the banks of the river, which followed the Pinnace with her drums and music until she came to the lock. There might you have seen the number of the people double increased and the traveller with divers gentlemen and others in his company (all strangers), very kindly received by knights, ladies, esquires and sundry other persons of the best ranks of fashion to the number of two thousand people or upward, of men, women and children, being half a mile from the town, whither the Pinnace was brought and placed in the king's forge at the Priory¹⁵; and such as were in the Traveller's company passed into the town, coming thither about five of the clock, and rested there, having travelled that day eight miles.

Upon Wednesday, being the fifth of August, between the hours of ten and eleven in the forenoon, he conveyed his Pinnace as privily as might be to the water, to avoid and beguid (*outwit*) the press of people, being then dinner time; at which time he thought that people would have least mind to look after his proceeding. Notwithstanding, upon the least news of his departure muttered, the people instantly increased and flocked together in greater troops and abundance than were there the

day before, with their drums and several instruments . . . They followed . . . this traveller all along upon the shore a mile and better upon Sunning lock¹⁶, where (but that God miraculously protected and defend him) both the Pinnace and he in her had been cast away and drowned; for, unadvisedly by the counsel of a miller, he presumed to skirt a narrow strait which had a great fall joining to the lock, where a stump had almost overwhelmed the Pinnace, but she escaped that danger, only receiving some quantity of water, about three or four gallons. About four or five of the clock in the afternoon he came to Sunning, whereby divers people of the better sort and condition with him and his company were very kindly entertained. There he rested that night, casting in his mind how he might escape the like troublesome locks and dangers.

Upon Wednesday, being the first of August¹⁷, between the hours of ten and eleven of the clock in the forenoon, he prepared his pinnace to travel upon wheels by land to Maydenhead, understanding it to be thither thirty miles by water and but eight miles by land¹⁸, besides many dangerous locks which might put him in great hazard; for he proceeded by land to Twyford, but had not passed half a mile when the main core of the ironwork brake, by reason whereof he could pass no further than Twyford, for it was four hours before it could be mended again, so there he rested at night, coming thither about four of the clock.

These crosses and impediments would have wearied many and moved them to discontentment . . . yet these could not set war and battle in his thoughts, or hinder the progress of his intendments. But that on Friday, being the seventh of August, between the hours of nine and ten of the clock in the forenoon, he began to proceed and go forward on his painful journey, which he found to be full of toil and labour, by reason of the deepness of the sand,

which caused the Pinnace to travel very sad and heavily. That day she travelled to Little Week¹⁹ in Maydenhead Thicket, being distant from Twyford four miles, and there rested about four of the clock.

Upon Saturday, the eight of August, between the hours of nine and ten of the clock that day, he travelled from Little Week in the Thicket aforesaid to Maydenhead, through which town he endured the most painful toil and travail that he had in all his journey, by reason of the deepness of the mire in the street, wherein the wheels pierced a foot deep at least, and so forward to Maydenhead Bridge over the Thames. Into which river he passed with his wheels until he was waterbourne, where he purposed to proceed on his journey the Monday following. So for that day he returned to Maydenhead about four of the clock, having travelled the same some three miles and there rested he that night and the next day, being the Sabbath day.

Upon Monday, being the tenth of August, between the hours of nine and ten in the morning, he began to travel from Maydenhead Bridge by water, to which place he came from Maydenhead upon his wheels, being entreated by divers knights and esquires that were there assembled that they might see the manner of his travel by land; which after they had fully viewed at their pleasure, he took off the wheels and launched her at the place where she was waterbourne the Saturday before upon her wheels, and so passed by water to Winsor, and there stayed to rest himself two hours, and thence rowed to Staines with his oars attending him, having a set of loud instruments of music in them from Maydenhead to London, to do him comfort and encouragement in his journey. And having travelled eighteen miles this day, he rested the night at Staines, coming thither about four of the clock.

Upon Tuesday, being the eleventh of August, between the hours of four and seven of the clock that morning, he began

to proceed forward towards Kingstone and arrived there between 10 and 11 of the clock the same forenoon, notwithstanding he stayed at Hampton Court half an hour by the entreaties of Sir Charles Manners²⁰, where he refreshed himself; so by estimation he rowed his Pinnace about five miles an hour for four hours together, by which the watermen were brought into wondrous distraction and admiration, one while conceiving the best of it, another while the worst, sometimes thinking it might be done by art and cunning, and sometimes again judging it a thing impossible . . . He stayed at Kingston three hours and from thence passed to Brainford. He landed at Master Harrison's Quay²¹, there dwelling and resting there Wednesday and Thursday, coming thither about 5 of the clock in the afternoon, and having rowed that day thirty miles.

Upon Thursday, being the 13 of August, between the hours of seven and eight of the clock in the evening, he privately bended his course towards London, only with one pair of oars in his company to carry sufficient witnesses of his landing at the Customs House Quay, leaving his musicians and the rest of his company behind him, doubting the multitude of boats and people might much annoy him if he should attempt to land there by day. So between the hours of 12 and 1 of the clock that night he landed at the Customs House and divers other witnesses that saw the whole performing of the journey and came with him thither.

From thence he returned again to Braine-ford with his pinnace and there landed by 4 of the clock in the morning, intending to prepare his Pinnace and his company in some better fashion, understanding the people's expectation of his coming to London and of his landing at the Custom House Quay; which had been performed again but for the misbehaviour and unruliness of the boats, that with such a multitude and throng pressed so near the

Pinnace that she could not any way have free passage.

The most part of Friday, Saturday and Monday he spent in painting and rigging her, with masts, yards, sails, flags, auncients, streamers and pendants, and all other provision for her ordnance, and fireworks, in as laudable a sort and fashion as for a ship of greater burden; in which the knights, ladies and gentlemen near Braine-ford, and all sorts of the common people round about that place, hearing and understanding of, resorted thither upon the Monday, expecting the Pinnace should that day have departed, but she intended not to proceed until the morrow following. The better sort entreated the commander of her to do that special favour that they might see the manner of her travel both by land and water; which request made by so worthy personages he willingly subscribed to, and with all expedition placed the Pinnace on her wheels and brought her from where she stood private (*alone*) into a large court, where there stood private so many coaches and the great gates were so low, as she could not that way have passage into the street. But another way being found by which she was brought forth, there wanted no spectator to attend her coming, but the street was full of people, and most of the better sort, for there were two hundred knights, ladies and gentlemen who, having seen the Pinnace pass by land, desired also that day that they might see her swim on the water. And they all satisfied their full contents and pleasure.

Upon Tuesday, being the nineteenth of August, between the hours of four and five of the clock in the morning, the Pinnace was brought and launched into the water and passed towards LONDON, with divers and loud instruments of music, shooting off her ordnance at her departure from Braine-ford. She came before Westminster between 7 and 8 a clock in the morning, which being described afar off, there came such a multitude of all sorts of boats that neither

she nor any of her company could row or stir anyway, by reason of their rude thrusting upon her. So she was constrained to press by all means she could to Somerset Court at the wall²², not being able to come near the stairs; at which place she was drawn up by ropes with force of men, and by them carried into a house in the Strand, where we now leave her with her further proceedings.

Upon Wednesday, being the nineteenth of August, between the hours of ten and eleven of the clock in the forenoon, the commander of the foresaid Pinnacle shaped his course to the Custom House of the City of London, with divers witnesses for the performance of his journey with him, who in the presence of the Customer, Controller and Surveyor there did offer to make an oath of the performance of the voyage, entreating a certificate of what he had effected; which was willingly granted and delivered under these officers' hands and seals, and he himself very kindly entertained by all the officers, and feasted at the Customs House, and all his company.

FINIS.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We are grateful to Lorraine Mephram for preparing the typescript at very short notice and to Mark Bowden for drawing the map.

NOTES

1. J. Footman, *History of the Parish Church of St Michael and All Angels, Chipping Lambourn*, 108. Elliott Stock, London 1894.
2. The original Customs House, which was destroyed in the Great Fire of London, was on the north bank of the Thames 300 yards upstream from the Tower.
3. The Essex family held land at Lambourn until the property was sold by William Essex in 1609. Cf. note 6 below.
4. The Harcourt family came from Stanton Harcourt west of Oxford. Robert Harcourt was born ?1574 and would have been a contemporary of William Essex (see note 6 below). The two families were

linked by marriage. Robert Harcourt made his own voyage in 1609 and described his travels in "A Relation of Voyage to Guiana", published in 1613. He died about 1631.

5. The Wenmans were another Oxfordshire family with branches at Carswell near Witney, seven miles from Stanton Harcourt, and at Fringford near Bicester. The family chapel is in Witney parish church. Francis Wenman's widow married Sir Charles Manners.
6. William Essex was born about 1575 and died ?1645. He was M.P. for Arundel in 1597-8 and for Stafford in 1601. He was married to Jane, the daughter of Sir Walter Harcourt, and became a baronet in 1611.
7. Upper Lambourn is roughly the correct distance north-west of Lambourn church.
8. Presumably the high ground near Green Down or Hackpen Hill.
9. Sir Edmund Fettiplace, who was knighted in 1603, held the manor of Rampayne at Childrey from 1581 to his death in 1613. Later in the 17th century the Fettiplace and Wenman families were linked in marriage.
10. Catimslow Hill, elsewhere in this account Cutchinglow Hill, seems to have been in the vicinity of Gore Hill, East Ilsley. By the 18th century this was known as Kate's Gore Hill.
11. Harbert's Lodge, Aldeworth, has not been traced, but a Harbert's Bottom is recorded in the neighbouring parish of Hampstead Norris.
12. This may refer to the hill between Streatley and Westridge Green.
13. Sir Michael Blunt held Mapledurham from 1564 to his death in 1610. He also purchased the manor of Mapledurham Chazey in 1582. He was knighted in 1591 and was Lieutenant of the Tower, where he is buried.
14. Caversham Bridge.
15. Speed's map of Reading, published in 1611, shows the medieval Greyfriars' Priory at the north-west end of the present Friar Street. The reference to the 'King's forge' remains unexplained.
16. Sonning Lock.
17. This must be an error. The correct date should be Thursday, the sixth of August.
18. Mr. Bush was misinformed. The correct distances are about eight miles overland and about twenty miles by river.
19. Littlewick Green, three miles west of Maidenhead.
20. Sir Charles Manners was the son and heir of Thomas Manners, fourth son of the first Duke of Rutland. He married the widow of Francis Wenman of Carswell. Wenman himself had died in 1599.
21. This reference has not been traced.
22. Somerset House on the north bank of the river, built by Protector Somerset in 1547.