



## Barry Lawrence Ruderman Antique Maps Inc.

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**The Plane of the Town and Mole of Tanger Discovering by ye little square Dott's the Mines which were made in ye Upper and Yorke Castle and Round the Towne By Ye Rt. Honble. the Lrd. Dartmouth for its demolishment.**

**Stock#:** 61976  
**Map Maker:** Phillips  
**Date:** 1684 circa  
**Place:** n.p. (Tangier?)  
**Color:** Pen & Ink with Wash Color  
**Condition:** Good  
**Size:** 28.5 x 20 inches full sheet  
**Price:** SOLD



### Description:

#### ***Contemporary, Seventeenth-Century Manuscript Map Illustrating the Destruction of an Important, Ill-Fated English Colony in Africa—With a Close Samuel Pepys Connection***

Impressive manuscript plan of Tangier (present-day Morocco) showing Admiral Lord Dartmouth's destruction of the English colony fortress using mines in 1683.

The map was drawn by the accomplished English surveyor Thomas Phillips, who accompanied Samuel Pepys and Admiral Lord Dartmouth on the 1683 expedition to dismantle Tangier.

The map shows the fortifications of Tangier laid out in exacting detail. The fort takes up the center of the plan, with battlements and bastions painstakingly recorded. Batteries and palisades are marked in dotted lines outside the main walls. Inside the main walls lie the town of Tangier, Yorke and the Upper Castles, while the Mole juts out to sea below the fortifications.

Inland, smaller defenses and outbuildings are also recorded. Several of these are reported as captured by the Moors in 1679 and 1680. They are decorated with tiny soldiers with long pikes, swords, and horses. A stream flows in "A Deep Valley" and bears the inscription, "the water course supposed to be stopped by the Moors."

It appears the fort, its surroundings, and the physical geography of the area were drawn first, possibly as a reference document for Philipps. Then, the document was needed for official purposes, necessitating the



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addition of a title cartouche (top center) and key (left).

The key lists over 34 points of interest. However, this is a plan of what was, not what is. As the title explains, "ye little square dott's the mines which were made in ye Upper, and Yorke Castles and Round the Towne." The entire fort and town was leveled and this plan was used to show the extent of the destruction. As Phillips notes with letter E, "The Harbour unserviceable forever."

#### **English Tangier**

Tangier and Bombay were part of the dowry of Charles II's Portuguese queen, Catherine of Braganza. The marriage contract was signed in June 1661, when Tangier seemed much the greater prize; Bombay in comparison was considered too distant. Tangier was turned into a massive, and very expensive, fortress at the entrance to the Mediterranean, more than fifty years before the English took control of Gibraltar in 1713. The colony was supposed to help suppress Barbary pirates, ward off foreign powers, and generally project English power into the Mediterranean.

The Tangier Colony became a major focus of English geopolitics (and internal politics) in the latter part of the seventeenth century, culminating with its abandonment and destruction in 1683 (elaborated below). The Tangier episode was an important experiment that yielded vital lessons for English imperialism in its early phase, particularly with respect to Africa and Gibraltar.

#### **The abandonment and leveling of English Tangier**

A 1676 survey of Tangier showed that there were 2,225 inhabitants of the colony, of whom fifty were army officers, 1,231 of other ranks, with 302 army wives and children. Parliament was concerned that the garrison was costing a hefty £140,000 a year to maintain. The King's frequent requests for more troops for the garrison raised suspicions that a standing army was being retained in Tangier to ensure a Catholic succession and absolute monarchy. In 1680 Parliament told the King that it would only grant supplies if he assented to a Bill of Exclusion to disinherit the Duke of York. The King refused to sacrifice his brother's right of succession to save Tangier.

In 1683, George Legge, Lord Dartmouth, went to Tangier in the company of naval official and diarist Samuel Pepys. In August of that year, Dartmouth, as Admiral of the Fleet and governor and captain general of Tangier, sailed from Plymouth. Pepys, as an observer, wrote an account of the expedition, which had a clandestine purpose. Dartmouth carried secret orders from Charles II to abandon Tangier. Dartmouth was to level the fortifications, destroy the harbor, and evacuate the troops.



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Once in Tangier, Lord Dartmouth had several concerns. One was the evacuation of sick soldiers and their families and possessions. 114 invalid soldiers and 104 women and children sailed in October in the ships *Unity* and *Diamond*, arriving in England in December. Dartmouth was also eager to free English sailors held captive in North Africa. He negotiated the release of nearly forty men, including several officers, some of whom had spent ten years in the hands of the Moroccans.

Dartmouth's final task was to blow up the English fortifications, leaving nothing for Moroccans or other powers who might follow. This took a considerable amount of work by the soldiers still stationed in the colony. They demolished the harbor wall and fortress buildings in the early weeks of 1684. As a final measure, they studded the walls of the fort with mines, to be blown as the last troops left the garrison. The official evacuation took place on February 5, 1684, with all troops free of the area by March.

It is likely that Phillips began this plan while in Tangier, although he may have also drafted or corrected it upon return to England. It was then needed by officials, perhaps to prove the thoroughness of the destruction. Prior to the final detonation of the mines, there had been much discussion about the efficacy and placing of the mines, and Phillips may have been trying to prove that he and his colleagues had done a systematic job.

Not all the residents of Tangier returned to England. Some of the departing soldiers were rewarded with large land grants in the newly acquired province of New York. Thomas Dongan, the 2nd Earl of Limerick and a former lieutenant-governor of Tangier, became New York provincial governor. William "Tangier" Smith, the last mayor of Tangier, obtained fifty miles of Atlantic oceanfront property on Long Island.

### **Samuel Pepys and Tangier**

Samuel Pepys, probably the most famous diarist in English history, was an early member of the Tangier Committee, which managed the colony. He was substantially enriched by his involvement in the Committee; in 1665, his estate increased in value by roughly £3,100, a fortune at the time, chiefly through his role as treasurer of the Tangier Committee.

Later, after Pepys' fall from favor in 1679, Tangier cropped up again as an important subject in his life. He was selected by the King to accompany Lord Dartmouth on the 1683 evacuation mission, thus offering him an opportunity to prove his worth to the Crown once again. Pepys was not told the details of the mission before he left London for Portsmouth on July 30, 1683. He had been given less than 48 hours' notice to report to his ship.



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Pepys was a natural choice to accompany Admiral Lord Dartmouth to Tangier; his fourteen years as treasurer of the Tangier Committee made him the ideal consultant for the Admiral. Pepys also had a good motive to make sure that the evacuation went off without a hitch, as the wealth he had accumulated could have come under scrutiny if there was a scandal or inquiry.

Pepys began a new diary on the voyage to Tangier and, through his writing, we are introduced to the maker of this map.

#### **John Seller, Thomas Phillips, and Tangier**

In his excellent essay, ["Seller, Pepys and the Seventeenth-Century London Map Trade"](#), Laurence Worms makes the argument that John Seller, the famous English mapmaker, might have accompanied Lord Dartmouth and Pepys to Tangier:

*Pepys of course knew Seller: he bought maps from him, sought his advice, commissioned him to collect books on navigation for the library. He may indeed have known him uncomfortably well on one occasion. In 1683, Pepys sailed on the expedition to Tangier. A few days out, the weather foul, he confided to his journal: "After dinner the weather continued bad ... forced to sit in little Mr. Sellers' side cabin upon the deck all afternoon to keep me dry and not sick". This is usually said not to be Seller the mapmaker, but the ship's muster confirms his first name as John and describes him as a "volunteer extraordinary". And we know, because Pepys tells us, that Seller was much concerned in the expedition, because he compiled a special platt (a sea-chart) specifically designed for use on the voyage. Why would this not be him? Why would there be another "volunteer extraordinary" of exactly that name? And the image of Pepys cooped up with Seller and trying not to be seasick over him is one I am reluctant to let go.*

It is in another conversation about Seller where we learn that the voyage also included on the greatest government mapmakers in the British Isles at the time: Thomas Phillips.

*Because, in a way, Pepys was sick all over Seller. It is on this voyage that we first hear the central charge, the crux of this long-standing accusation of dishonesty and plagiarism. It was en route to Tangier that the military engineer, Thomas Phillips, tells Pepys that Seller had produced his first maritime atlas, the English Pilot, from "old worn Dutch copper plates" bought "for old copper" - for scrap - and had simply issued "the very same platts ... without a Dutch word so much as altered" in his "pretended new book".*



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### **Thomas Phillips**

Thomas Phillips (1635?-1693) began his career, as best we can tell, in the Royal Navy, where, in 1661, he was first recorded as a master gunner aboard HMS *Portsmouth*. Later, he ingratiated himself with George Legge, Lord Dartmouth. From 1679-80 he undertook a survey of the Channel Islands, during which he produced exceptional topographical drawings and manuscript maps. He also undertook a major survey of Ireland at the behest of Charles II.

Still with Legge, by now Lord Dartmouth, Phillips joined in on the expedition to Tangier and recorded the expedition's success in a series of drawings. Pepys recorded that Phillips had:

*views on many topics, including the improvement of navigation skills, the need to study the world's currents, the importance of mathematics in the educational curriculum of children intended for careers at sea, the simplification of the rigging of ships, and the needlessness of discovering the means of calculating longitude, which he believed would only bring about miscarriages at sea.*

After his return to England, Pepys kept a number of images of Tangier in his impressive library. These included a watercolor view of the demolition of the mole drawn by Phillips.

The National Library of Ireland has a very extensive digitized record of Phillips' surveys and drawings, as does the National Maritime Museum, Greenwich and the British Library. [The National Library of Ireland collection can be viewed here.](#)

A review of Thomas Phillips' other known maps, particularly those at the British Library, conclusively establishes that he was the maker of the present survey.

### **Provenance**

Ombersley Court, Worcestershire, United Kingdom; Sold by the Trustees of the Sandys Trust at Sotheby's London, May 14, 2019, Lot 61 (with other unrelated maps).

### **Detailed Condition:**

Iron gall ink and blue and grey watercolor on laid paper. Laid on additional sheets of old laid paper.