

Peel's Golden Shipwreck

The Lucy, of London, 1702

Lucy (1519) – Full Description

Front Cover

Peel's Golden Shipwreck

The Lucy, of London, 1702

By Adrian Corkill

Peel's Golden Shipwreck

The Lucy, of London, 1702

Dedication

Peel's Golden Shipwreck

The Lucy, of London, 1702

This book is dedicated to all those who lost their lives in trying to reach the safety of the shore to the north of Peel from the ship Lucy, of London, on a dark and stormy January night three centuries ago.

Peel's Golden Shipwreck

The Lucy, of London, 1702

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Introduction

The year 2002 marks the three hundredth anniversary of the wreck of the ship Lucy, of London. Since first becoming aware of the wreck of the Lucy a number of years ago, after I was given a photocopy of Michael Dolley's academic article from the late 1970s, I thought that to publish my own interpretation of the records that exist on the Lucy in the Manx Museum Library, would be an appropriate way of marking this important anniversary of her loss.

In the early eighteenth century little in the way of local news was recorded. The events following the loss of the Lucy have survived to this day because of the legal proceedings brought against a number of Manxmen for illegal salvage of goods from the wreck.

The relative riches that the wreck of the Lucy brought to the coast of the parish of Kirk German on the west coast of the Isle of Man to the north of the town of Peel posed a great temptation to the local inhabitants, many of whom it can be imagined lived an impoverished lifestyle. The prospect of being able to sell goods which they found on the shore for what to them were considerable sums of money most have seemed like a golden opportunity. However, it was not just the poor who succumbed to temptation. Thomas Woods, of Knocksharry, captain of the parish of Kirk German and a member of the Isle of Man's parliament, the House of Keys, paid a considerable personal price for the abuse of his position of authority. Thomas Woods' career contrasts sharply with that of Curate Christian, of Ballaugh. Despite also being implicated in the illegal acquisition of goods from the Lucy, his career appeared to suffer no long term affects.

The crew and passengers on board the Lucy carried with them an unknown quantity of gold coins and jewellery. Some of this was found shortly afterwards on various beaches in the vicinity of White Strand. It is intriguing to think on how much more gold was lost to the waves and may yet remain on the beach to this day awaiting searches of a treasure hunter.

Above all else it is hoped that you will find that this book provides a fascinating insight into how the lives of a number of Manx men and women were shaped by a shipwreck exactly three hundred years ago.

Adrian Corkill

September 2002

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The Lucy

Very little is known about the Lucy apart from the facts that she was a ship constructed of wood, she was registered in the port of London and her master was Captain Benjamin Holt who lived in Greenwich, London. No evidence is known to have survived that might give a clearer picture of the type of vessel, tonnage, number of masts, where and when built and by whom. It is not known either who the identity of the owners, but it is possible that the captain had some share in the vessel. The number of crew totalled perhaps fourteen to sixteen men from the evidence that one long boat from her contained the captain, one passenger and seven crewmen and this represented about half the number of persons on board at the time. This would suggest a fairly sizeable vessel for the time with two to three masts and with a possible tonnage of two hundred tons. It is clear that she was not just a coastal vessel and traded far and wide.

The actual journey that the Lucy was undertaking is examined in a later chapter, but it seems likely that she was bound from Guinea in Africa or possibly the Mediterranean to Scotland.

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Disaster Strikes

For reasons that have not yet been determined by research but which can be speculated on, the ship Lucy was off the west coast of the Isle of Man on Tuesday 13th January 1702. She was presumably anchored in an area referred to as "Peel Roades". A "road" is a partly sheltered anchorage and it would refer to the Lucy having anchored in Peel Bay. The town of Peel is located midway up the west coast of the Isle of Man. Whilst Peel Bay is sheltered from winds in the east, southeast or south, it is exposed to varying degrees to winds from other points of the compass and, in particular, winds from the west or northwest. Should the wind suddenly swing round from a southeast, a common direction for winter storms in the Irish Sea, to a west or northwest wind upon passage of the fronts around a storm depression, then a sailing vessel anchored in Peel Bay could be in great danger.

At some point in the day the crew and passenger of the Lucy had cause to abandon their ship leaving behind an unknown amount of cargo but attempting to carry some personal belongings and valuables with them to the safety of the shore. A long boat, a small boat used by ships to ferry people to the shore, containing Captain Holt, Madame McKenzie, the mystery passenger, and seven sailors tried to make it to the shore and was overturned at Traie Vane to the north of Peel. Traie Vane in English means "White Strand". Today White Strand is the name of a particular beach about one mile north of Peel whilst another small section of beach further to the north is today called Traie Vane. However, it is likely that in 1702 the entire stretch of beach from Peel north towards Kirk Michael was known as simply Try bane (Traie Vane)¹.

All nine deceased persons were buried in Peel. Captain Holt and the seven crewmen were buried on Saturday 17th January in the churchyard at Peel near the style and opposite the cross. Madam McKenzie's body, however, was interred on Sunday 18th January 1702 in Peel Cathedral which indicates how the local establishment viewed her importance².

On 27th January, William Crellin, of Peel, upon oath before Joseph Rowe, Comptroller and Sylvester Huddleston, Waterbailiff, stated that he found the body of a woman cast up on the beach at Trybane (an old form of "Traie Vane") on Wednesday 14th January and lodged it in Peel church. Undoubtedly this was the body of Madam McKenzie, being described as a "gentlewoman's body". Charles Ratcliff, of Knockaloe Moar in Kirk Patrick, told William Crellin that he had found a ring on one of her fingers and later that day removed it. Charles Ratcliff told William Crellin that he would give him something if he kept quiet about the ring. In fact William Crellin had not seen the ring at all, as Madam McKenzie had been wearing gloves and he had not at any point taken them off her hands.³

Later that same day, Captain Holt's body was found by John and William Kelly on the strand further towards Peel from where Madam McKenzie's body was discovered⁴.

The rest of the crew of the Lucy, including William Young who later became the master of what was left of the Lucy, survived and presumably rowed ashore in another boat or

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perhaps had been dropped ashore by the long boat previous to the disaster. The exact events of that fateful day have not been recorded.

Later, on 27th June, William Young was given power of attorney by Captain Holt's administrator, William Barnes, a mariner living in the parish of St Paul Shadwell in London, to recover Captain Holt's possessions held by the authorities in the Isle of Man on behalf of Captain Holt's son Warner Holt. Gold dust is especially mentioned⁵ [need full transcript of this power of attorney]. This gives the first clue as to the wealth that was being carried on the Lucy.

¹ A Paraniumismatic Sidelight on Several Centuries of Manx History – The Wreck of the Lucy (1702), Michael Dolley

² Parish of German Burial Records Microfilm Spool PR12 – Manx Museum Library

³ Enquest File 1701 folio 13 Microfilm Spool RB448 – Manx Museum Library

⁴ See Chapter ? for a more detailed account

⁵ Episcopal Wills

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Illegal Salvage Of Wrecked Goods From The Long Boat

At 10 pm on Wednesday 14th January James Stevenson, of Largodoo¹, was walking along the strand at the southwestern end of Try Bane when he observed from a distance Thomas Leece, also of Largodoo, pulling about four yards of what appeared to be red silk from the sea with the use of a gaff. Captain Woods of Knocksharry was close by Thomas Leece and helped him wring the water from the piece of silk which turned out to be a woman's morning gown. However, before James Stevenson got to the scene Captain Thomas Woods had put the silk gown into his britches. James Stevenson asked Captain Woods to see the gown but Captain Woods refused to show the object or tell James Stevenson its exact nature. A coat was also found by one of James Stevenson's boatmen which was declared to William Young, the new master of the Lucy (at this stage she had not run aground and William Young had replaced his friend Captain Benjamin Holt as the master of the ship)².

At the same time Robert Killey found a waistcoat which was woven with red silk, and silver and gold thread. The following day he found two old coats, a hat and a wig.

Two days later on Friday 16th January James McBoy³, of Ballahig⁴, William Quayle, of Camell⁵, Thomas Crellin and Joseph Caine, both of Ballakey, were travelling to Kirk Michael when at about 5 p.m. they saw a girl climbing the bank above the beach near Knocksharry with something on her back. They took the object from her and upon closer examination discovered it to be a coverlet for a bed and made of silk. The outside was coloured red and the inside was striped. Upon enquiring as to the identity of the girl she replied that she was the daughter of Captain Woods and that "if her father was at home he would come give them hott heads". She then ran in the direction of Ballanere⁶ from whence there came three or four women. The group of men supposed one of the women to be Captain Woods' wife and another to be the wife of Gilbert Killey. The group of women shouted threatening words at the men and forcibly took back the coverlet which was later carried away by a boy on horseback. A witness the event, Joseph Kaighen, of Kirk Michael, confirmed the identifies of the girl and other women to the authorities viz the wife of Captain Woods, her daughter Grace, the wife of Joseph Woods, of Ballanere and Jony Killey, wife of Gilbert Killey. Also present were some of Thomas Woods' servants but Joseph Kaighen was unsure of their names.

On the same day Patrick Caine, Joseph Steene and Hugh Woods, all of the parish of Kirk Michael and William Woods of Kirk Michael village saw Thomas Cannon, of Jurby find a piece of stripped silk on the beach. They were unsure of what it had come from, but supposed it to be piece of a mant⁷. The group of men found three old torn coats themselves but nothing else⁸.

On Monday 19th January, Joseph Quayle, of Camell saw Patrick Quayle of Kirk Patrick and his company find a petticoat with silver and gold lace on it and also a small gold chain "like a chaine usually under keys" which was given to Robert Christian, of Ballawillans⁹.

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A little later the same day, Joseph Shimmin, of Ballabay in Kirk German, saw Joseph Killey find a black piece of silk about a yard in length on the beach. He also saw several other persons take up various pieces of cloth and linen. Joseph Shimmin, himself, acquired a piece of black silk about two yards long, an old shirt, an old pair of breeches, a hat and a wig¹⁰.

More and more good were being washed close to the beach. Grace Woods, daughter of Captain Thomas Woods, was observed by Ann Woods, wife of Joseph Woods of Ballanere¹¹ and Jony Killey, wife of Gilbert Killey, to find a calico¹¹ counter pair for a bed. She passed this to Joseph Woods who carried it on horseback to Captain Woods' house. Joseph Killey, of Ballanere, found a woman's scarf made of black silk and about two yards in length. Thomas Kewin, servant to Robert Christian, of Ballawillin, delivered to Captain Ratcliffe a blue hat ribbon interwoven with silver¹².

¹ Modern spelling is Lhergydhoo

² Enquest File 1701 folio 13 Microfilm Spool RB448 – Manx Museum Library

³ Modern version of McBoy is Boyd

⁴ Modern spelling thought to be Ballig

⁵ Modern spelling is Cammall

⁶ Modern spelling is Ballanayre

⁷ A mant is a type of dress or gown

⁸ Enquest File 1701 folio 14 Microfilm Spool RB448 – Manx Museum Library

⁹ Modern name is Glen Wyllin

¹⁰ Enquest File 1701 folio 15 Microfilm Spool RB448 – Manx Museum Library

¹¹ Calico is a white or unbleached cotton cloth

¹² Enquest File 1701 folio 15 Microfilm Spool RB448 – Manx Museum Library

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Public Proclamation And Amnesty

To prevent further illegal salvage and to cease the scurrilous behaviour of some of the inhabitants of Kirk German and Kirk Michael near to the scene of where the long boat had been wrecked, acts which would have caused the Lord of Man to have been severely embarrassed, the Governor of the Isle of Man, James Cranstoun¹, issued the following proclamation to the Coroner of the Sheading of Michael:

"Whereas it is not only by the Laws of God and the Christian Religion but also by the Lawes of all well Govern'd Countrys & Societys a duty enjoyned and required of all persons living upon the sea: Coasts and near the sea shore to give their best aid and assistance towards the saving and securing all prsons as doe by the will of God suffer any misfortune at sea or shipwreckt upon their Coasts, and likewise to the saving and securing of all goods belonging to the persons or Ships, falling under such misfortunes, And tho the neglecting to give this Charitable reliefe to people in distress, in saving both the psons & goods so farr as men have it in their power to do it, is both a great sin ag^t God and a great reproach to a Country, yet it has been always thought Just and reasonable, that all such psons who wth an honest designe take paines and care either to save psons lives or recover or preserve goods so shipwreckt and Cast on shore and to restore them to their first own^{rs} should be honestly and Justly rewarded for what paines & trouble they are at in preserving the same, thereby to incourage all persons to use their utmost endeavour for the assistance and reliefe of people in such distress. And now forasmuch as several psons have been lately most unfortunately cast away and put on shore near peeletowne in this Isle who came over as passengers or seamen on board the Lucy of London several of them having goods about them of a considerable value, And whereas some of the sd psons have been most barbarously and inhumanly stript after they were thrown up by the sea and whatever either goods or other effects they had ab^t them taken away, and likewise several other goods cloaths and other effects w^{ch} have been drove on shore by the tyde have been found and taken up and much of them are yet concealed by some of the people living in and about those parts, And whereas it is my duty to see that every man as well the stranger as y^e Native meet wth equall Justice and fair dealing wthin this Isle that persons who act the honest part either in saving peoples lives or securing any goods in order to have then restored to the right owners, shall have honest and suitable rewards given them for so doing, so I am resolved to punish to the utmost all such as behave themselves inhumanly or theivishly and dishonestly towards people in such Calamities. Therefore I request you to make publicacōn in ye several parish Churches wthin yo^r Sheading the next Sunday (after Divine service) that if any pson or psons have already taken up or found any goods, silver, Gold, Jewells Rings, Cloaths or any thing whatsoever belonging to the above mencōned psons or lost from the said ship, that they doe bring in the same either to y^e Waterbayliff or to the Corōn^r of the sheading wthin the space of forty eight hours after publicacōn of this my order, And that likewise all psons who shall at any time hereafter find or recover any of the afforesd goods shall also bring them in to this Waterbayliff or Coron^r of their sheading wthin forty eight hours after so finding and recovering the same and I will take care that they shall have a liberal & bountyfull reward given them proporcōnable to the

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value of the goods they shall so bring in. And if any person or psons whatsoever shall hereafter be found or discovered to conceal and disclaime any of the afforemencōned goods and effects and not bring them in as afforesd, they shall be lookt upon as ffellonious psons and proceeded agt according to the utmost severity of the Law. And I doe further order and declare that if any pson will informe me, or any other of our hon^{rble} Lords principle officers wthin this Isle, whereany of the abovemenconed goods are concealed, so as they may be recovered, the person so informing, shall have y^e same reward that would have been given to the pson or psons so concealing y^e sd goods if they had honestly brought them in. And that no person may hereafter plead ignorance hereof, I require and charge you that this my ord.^r be read both in English and Manks on y^e sd day and in y^e parish Churches afforesd that all psons may take due notice thereof and conforme themselves thereunto accordingly. Given under my hand at Castle Rushen the 22th day of Jan: Anno Dmi 1701/2

J Cranstoun

To the Coron^r of Michell sheading”²

¹ Governor of the Isle of Man from 1701 until his death in 1703

² Liber Scacc 1702 folio 66 Microfilm Spool RB449a – Manx Museum Library

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The Lucy Runs Aground

The Lucy remained anchored in Peel Bay, presumably with no crew, from 13th January until 7th February when she was finally driven ashore and totally wrecked. A long period of rough weather must have endured to prevent anyone from re-boarding and attempting to save her. Almost all the goods and cargo was lost in the wreck. Much of the timber and ironwork was saved from the hull and sold¹. The Lord of Man paid thirty pounds to William Young, the master of the Lucy following Captain Holt's death, for one half of the wreck and the Bishop of Sodor and Mann, Thomas Wilson (1662 – 1755) bought the other half, but the Lord of Man bought further iron and pewter from the Bishop. It is very possible that the Bishop was purchasing timber in connection with the refurbishment of Bishop's Court near Kirk Michael and various churches.²

¹ Liber Scacc 1702 folio 68 Microfilm Spool RB449a – Manx Museum Library

² A Paranoimistic Sidelight on Several Centuries of Manx History – The Wreck of the Lucy (1702), Michael Dolley

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Stealing From The Bodies

The Lucy certainly carried riches and to the locals on the Kirk German coast of the Isle of Man even a small item, such as a gold button, would have been a valuable acquisition. Stealing possessions, and especially personal possessions from those unfortunate enough to have been shipwrecked and drowned, is viewed by respectable people, now as then in 1702, as a despicable crime. It is no surprise then that the authorities took a very strict view on those who committed such crimes. The riches of the Lucy certainly tempted many and a few went further picking what they could from the bodies that they found on the shore.

John and William Kelly, of Ballacoan¹ in the parish of Kirk Michael, met with William Corlett, of Ballagoun², and his man servant, on the beach under Ballacranan³ on Wednesday 14th January, all involved on the outlook for goods washed ashore from the Lucy's unfortunate long boat which had contained Captain Holt and Madam McKenzie. Upon searching along the strand they came across the body of Madam McKenzie. William Corlett ordered the two Kelly brothers to go to the town of Peel to inform people there of what had happened and to get a carriage or cart to transport the body back to Peel.

Upon walking along the strand between Glan Brough⁴ and Peel they found the body of a man which had been thrown upon the sand by the last tide as they surmised as when they found the body it was sunrise and the tide about half flood. The body of Captain Holt carried many items, which would have tempted the Kelly brothers, items which must have seemed very valuable. They succumbed to the temptation and decided to strip the body. However, just as they were in the process of doing this their luck changed and a lad appeared on the strand. He was later to stand witness against the Kelly brothers. However, at the time they didn't consider this and continued to search the body.

In one of the pockets in Captain Holt's britches John Kelly found a small box, made of wood, containing valuable items and in another pocket they found a clout⁵ containing coins tied by a cord to secure it. He also took off a ringer from one of Captain Holt's fingers. Meanwhile, William Kelly and the lad took Captain Holt's coat, vest, shirt, waistcoat and shoes. William Kelly also removed the buckles from Captain Holt's shoes and gave them to John Kelly.

John Kelly left the strand without examining what was in either the box or the clout and carried them home. He then hid his "booty" in a hole in one of the walls of his corn house, and he also hid the ring and the shoe buckles in another place in his house. He told no one else of either finding the stolen items or concealing them until he was apprehended and imprisoned in Castle Rushen, together with his brother William and a third man, Adam McBoy⁶.

On 30th January in front of James Cranstoun, Chris Parker, John Rowe, John Parr and Sylvester Huddleston, the governor and officers of the Isle of Man, the sealed items in the possession of John and William Kelly were brought before them. The clout was opened and found to contain gold dust albeit damp. The bag, string and seals were found to weigh twenty ounces and one penny weight. Next the small wooden box was opened and found to contain four pieces of gold viz: a small bar of gold, two Indian pendants and a mourning ring engraved with the motto "Memento Mozi" and "A. H. May the 25th 1694". All four objects weighed one

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ounce, one quarter ounce and eleven grains. The box also contained five guineas. It seems likely that the engraving on the mourning ring refers to Captain Holt's wife. Perhaps her name was Ann Holt? In addition to the gold objects, John Kelly also had a pair of silver shoe buckles.

All the items were then placed in a bag which was sealed and placed in the Receiver General's office awaiting the claim of a person with just ownership which presumably would be the executor, or person given power of attorney, of Captain Holt's estate⁷. It would seem likely that William Young would have laid claim to these items.

In a Chancery Court before a jury of six men at Castle Rushen, consisting of William Cannell, Philip Cannell and Adam Callister, all of Kirk Michael, and William Craine, Sylvester Mylchreest and Gilbert Mylchreest, all of Kirk German, the Kelly brothers were found "*guilty of a great fault and misdemean^{er} concealing ye sd things after publication was made to bring all things on the strand, and do therefore leave them to ye mercy of the Court for a fine and punishm^t.*"

Adam McBoy who was made privy to the concealment, but had said nothing to the authorities and so was deemed an accessory to the Kelly brothers' crime⁸. He also had a pair of gold shoe buckles weighing one ounce, one quarter ounce and two penny weights, in addition to three pairs of gold shirt buttons weighing one ounce two penny weights and fourteen grains. Finally he had in his possession four guineas from the Lucy, two of which were given as a reward to persons who were instrumental in discovering who had stripped Captain Holt's body. All items were lodged with the Receiver General on 31st January.

James Cranstoun, presiding over the Court, delivered the following punishments to the three accused:

"John Kelly is fined vi (shillings) viii (pence) and William Kelly & Adam McBoy in iii (shillings) iiii (pence) a piece in respect of their poverty and all three to sitt in the stocks at peelee tomorrow being the 13th instant from the hour of 11 of the clock to one wth a paper pinned on their backs signifying their crime and their hands tyed behind their back^{9,10}."

¹ The modern version of Ballacoan cannot be determined

² Modern spelling is Ballagawne

³ Modern spelling is Ballacarnane

⁴ Modern spelling is Glion Broigh

⁵ A clout is piece of cloth or leather

⁶ The modern form of McBoy is Boyd

⁷ Enquest File 1701 folio 9 Microfilm Spool RB448 – Manx Museum Library

⁸ Enquest File 1701 folio 10 Microfilm Spool RB448 – Manx Museum Library

⁹ Enquest File 1701 folio 11 Microfilm Spool RB448 – Manx Museum Library

¹⁰ Liber Scacc 1702 folio 72 Microfilm Spool RB449a – Manx Museum Libarry

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Concealing Of Wrecked Goods

Shortly after the Lucy ran aground, Captain Thomas Woods of Knocksharry, one of the members of the House of Keys, the Manx Parliament, and the captain of the parish of Kirk German was commanded by the Governor of the Isle of Man, John Cranstoun, to organise whatever number of men he could to assist him in the salving of wrecked goods from the shore and then deliver the goods to the waterbailiff or coroner. Captain Woods scandalously ignored this order and concealed some of the more valuable goods for himself. He was therefore dismissed at a hearing held on 12th March from the House of Keys by the order of the Lord of Man.

On the same day, at a court held at Castle Rushen, John Curphey, of Coilebane, and John Kewley, of Kirk Christlezayre, were fined for violently taking two iron bolts, two iron rings and some cord from Henry Quayle, servant to Henry Woods of Kirk Michael. Henry Quayle had taken up these items from the shipwreck of the Lucy, his master having orders to employ his servant and others to save what they could from the shore. Each man was fined the sum of two shillings six pence paid to the Lord of Man. They were also ordered to pay damages of four shillings to Henry Woods for his trouble and expenses in travelling to Castletown twice in connection with the matter. Likewise Henry Quayle received damages of two shillings and six pence. John Curphey and John Kewley had to pay both damages and fine before they were allowed to leave the Castle.

1 Liber Scacc 1702 folio 73 Microfilm Spool RB449a – Manx Museum Library

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Treasure On The Shore

On the evening of St Patrick's Day, 17th March, William Ratcliffe, servant to the now disgraced Thomas Woods, of Knocksharry, went on to the shore at Traybane. Robert Cannell, also of Knocksharry, was on the beach at the same time, a short distance away. William Ratcliffe was searching some rock pools when he found a gold coin, about the size of a shilling piece, and ran up the beach. Robert Cannell saw William Ratcliffe's obvious excitement and chased after him. Robert Cannell soon caught up with William Ratcliffe and persuaded him to hand over the coin and later paid three shillings and six pence to Ratcliffe's mother.

Three or four days later William Ratcliffe spoke of his find of a gold coin at his master's house when in the company of one of his master's neighbours named Ann Woods, wife of Joseph Woods, of Ballanere¹. She agreed to go down with him to the strand to search for further coins. They searched the same rock pool where he had found the gold coin a few days previously, but with no additional success. The pair moved to another pool and struck luck, finding three round and three square gold coins. The coins were later handed to his master, Thomas Woods who went immediately down to the same spot on the beach with William Ratcliffe and lifted a boulder with two hammers and found another piece of square gold underneath it.

Several times Thomas Woods warned William Ratcliffe not to tell anyone about their discovery and gave him money to hold his tongue. William Ratcliffe declared that Robert Cannell did not change his coin with Hugh Black in Ramsey and that his master, Thomas Woods, had Hugh Black weigh all the coins. William Ratcliffe then asked Thomas Woods for the return of the coins that he himself had found, but Grace Woods, Thomas Woods's daughter, dissuaded him from doing that. William Ratcliffe did not say anything for many months as he was still in the employ of Thomas Woods. Even on the last day of his employment, Thomas Woods gave him a shilling to maintain his silence on the matter, but after leaving service William Ratcliffe went to the authorities². Thomas Woods was to add to his earlier embarrassment and disgrace of being thrown out of the House of Keys and be prosecuted in Court for retaining goods, namely gold coins, found on the shore.

When questioned at the Court Hearing at Castle Rushen, on 7th June, William Ratcliffe, as an informant, declared that he did not disclose the matter of finding the coins sooner as Thomas Woods had warned him in the strictest fashion of the consequences of disclosure. Even on his last day of employment, Thomas Woods had given him another warning not to disclose the matter as well as a "sweetener" payment of a shilling.

The Court Hearing was reconvened on 12th June when Thomas Woods acknowledged and confessed before the Court that the informant, William Ratcliffe, and his daughter, Ann Woods, had given him five pieces of gold viz two round pieces and three square pieces. He further confessed that after receiving the previously mentioned coins he went down to the strand with William Ratcliffe and his daughter Ann and found one further gold coin. The Court ordered Thomas Woods and his daughter Ann Woods to personally appear on Thursday 17th June *"To answer such matters as shall be objected ag^t them, and ye sd Tho Woods shall then and there bring in such pieces of gold as have been found by him or any other person to his knowledge w^tout fraud or Collution or Concealm^t then &c."*³

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Thomas Woods came before the Court at Castle Rushen on Thursday 17th June and brought pieces of gold viz: four Spanish pistoles⁴, one French Louis de Or' and a half, one half of a Jacobus piece and one foreign gold coin of about eight shillings value. He also produced before the Court two French pieces of silver, one of which was valued at about two shillings and two pence value, and the other at five pence. Thomas Woods declared also another French piece of silver about the value of the first mentioned silver coin which he changed with Hugh Black, of Ramsey, for two shillings. In turn Hugh Black exchanged the coin to a "Scotch man" for two shillings and two pence.

When asked if this was a full list of all the coins that he found Thomas Woods declared that it was all the coins. However, William Ratcliffe was asked to give further evidence and he asserted that there was one round piece found that was much larger and thicker than any of the pieces produced that day and the piece purporting to be it was not in fact it. Was Thomas Woods telling the truth or was he still trying to deceive the court by substituting coins of a lower value?

To help clarify this matter Hugh Black was sworn before the Court and asked to give evidence as to exactly what coins he had exchanged for Thomas Woods and any other person. He declared that he changed all the above mentioned pieces of gold for Thomas Woods and his family except one Spanish pistole and he did also exchange the silver as stated by Thomas Woods in his evidence. He also declared that he changed for Robert Cannell, of Knocksharry, five pieces of gold viz: two Spanish pistoles, one half of a Jacobus piece, one French piece of gold of about nine shillings in value and one piece only identified as being "foreign" valued at about eight shillings. All five pieces were placed before the Court by Hugh Black together with the value of the pieces of silver he disposed of to the Scotsman as detailed in above⁵.

The final witness to be called was Jane Cannell, daughter of Robert Cannell, of Knocksharry. She was examined by the Court as to whether she knew of any person who had found gold on the strand. She replied that she knew of no one except for a small piece of thick gold that her sister had found which was passed on to her father and Thomas Woods. When examined by the Court, both Thomas Woods and Robert Cannell declared that the piece of gold referred to was one of the two Spanish pistoles that Robert Cannell had brought in.

At the final meeting of the Chancery Court held at Castle Rushen on 1st July the verdict was declared:

"The Court having considered the unjust and illegal practices of the before named Thomas Woods and Ro. Cannell in concealing of the beforementioned pieces of gold and silver contrary to an order published by y^e late Govern^r Cranstoun remaining upon Record, hath therefore fined the said Thomas Woods in five pound and the sd Rob. Cannell in three pounds to be levied without any mitigation.

Jon Parr

Chris Parker

J Rowe

Dan Mcylrea"⁶

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The Derby Papers refer to the coins found by Thomas Woods and Robert Cannell:

"....several pieces of gold found by Thomas Woods and Robert Cannell on the shore near Peel which are due to our Honourable Lord by his prerogative viz six pistoles, a Jacobus cut in two, one Louis D'Ore and a half, two Arabian pieces of gold, one French piece of gold about the value of half a Louis D'Ore, two French pieces of silver about 2-9-0 value, and two English shillings and not charged in the aforegoing accounts being sent to his Lord in Specie by Governor Maudesley."

On 24th January 1705, Thomas Christian was paid the sum of four pounds as a reward for handing in gold which may have come from the wreck of the Lucy⁷ Coins were still being found as late as 1715 at the shore near Peel. In that year three Spanish pistoles were found and the finder was allowed to keep one of them as a reward⁸

¹ Modern spelling is Ballanayre

² Liber Scacc 1702 folio 23 Microfilm Spool RB449a – Manx Museum Library

³ Liber Scacc 1702 folio 24 Microfilm Spool RB449a – Manx Museum Library

⁴ Pistole was the French name given to a Spanish gold coin in use from 1537; it was a double escudo, the gold unit, and was worth 16s. 113/4d. sterling. The name was also given to the louis d'or of Louis XIII. of France, and to other European gold coins of about the value of the Spanish coin.

⁵ Liber Scacc 1702 folio 25 Microfilm Spool RB449a – Manx Museum Library

⁶ Liber Scacc 1702 folio 26 Microfilm Spool RB449a – Manx Museum Library

⁹Derby Papers 1731/2 Microfilm Spool DP8 – Manx Museum Library

⁹Custom Ingate/Outgates 1716 Microfilm Spool DP10 – Manx Museum Library

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Further Appeals

The appeal of the Isle of Man's governor, John Cranstoun, on 22nd January had limited affect as testified by the incidents and subsequent court actions involving firstly John Curphey and John Kewley, and then Thomas Woods. There must have been others who concealed goods and were not discovered. On 12th April he issued a further notice:

"Whereas upon the late great misfortune of several psons being drowned in Peele Bay from a long boat coming out of the ship Lucy of London my orders were published in several parish Churches of this Isle requiring that all psons who had found or might thereafter find any goods belonging to the sd psons or lost from the sd Boat should wthin a limited time menconed in y^e sd ord^r restore y^e same for w^{ch} they should be fully & liberally rewarded, Certifying all psons that whoever should afterwards be found concealing any of the sd goods whether they were things taken of or from y^e corpse of those persons drowned or good thrown up by y^e sea they should be proceeded ag^t wth y^e upmost severity of the Law as by my sd ord^r bearing date 22nd Jan last may more at large appear"

The language of the appeal demonstrates a certain degree of frustration on the governor's part that despite being warned and seeing others being punished there were still those prepared to take the risk and salvage parts of the Lucy or her cargo for their own use:

"Yet I am given to understand and have very Credible informacon that notwithstanding my order and in contempt of the Law, and that Justice due to all men but more especially to people in distress and suffering by such a Calamity; several Considerable quantitys both of the Timber and Iron so bought for our Hon^{ble} Lds use, and also several goods belonging both to y^e psons cast way, and to y^e own^{rs} and Merch^{ts} as being part of the Cargo of y^e sd ship have been taken up and are yet concealed by many people over y^e Country to y^e great Scandal and reproach of the sd Isle, rendering y^e people thereof liable to be censured as Barbarians and Inhumane so that y^e psons greatly deserve to be punished in a most Exemplary maner to y^e terror of others who may presume to comit the like Crimes, and also take of ye reproach thereby brought upon many honest and Inocent people in ye Countryside."

He must have been aware of the social standing of Madam Mackenzie and was clearly sensitive as to how his authority in the Isle of Man would be judged if it was seen that ordinary people disregarded his orders. As the Lord of Man's representative he was under pressure to implement the full effect of the law in order to prevent what would be seen outside the Isle of Man as the pilfering of possessions of good and honest people who had met with misfortune. On the other hand, the Lord Bishop of the Isle of Man, [his name] could evidently see that the great poverty of ordinary people in the countryside of the Isle of Man formed a great temptation for them to conceal goods that they found:

"Yet seeing the R^t Rev^d the Ld Bp of this Isle hath interceded wth me that I would pass by and pardon what offences have been hitherto committed in y^e premises, to y^e end that such psons who through Ignorance or mistake are guilty may have time to reform, and know how shamefull & dishonest and how contrary both to y^e Laws of God and man it is to conceal and detain other mens goods, Therefore I do at his Lops desire and request hereby freely pardon

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and forgive all psons who have been any way guilty of concealing any part of the above mentioned ship goods or Cargo hitherto."

At this point Deemster Parr and David Murray (a Douglas merchant well acquainted with ships and their cargoes) had been employed by the owners of the Lucy and the owners of her cargo to secure as much of the ship and cargo as possible. As an incentive to local people to declare goods he granted them a third share in the value of the goods that they recovered between the 12 April and the 24 April:

"Therefore I do hereby once more ord^r and require that all pson or psons who have found or concealed or who have in their Custody or who shall hereafter find or get into their Custody any part, either of the sd ship or Cargo or any thing whatever belonging to the same. That is to say all Timber and Iron belonging to y^e same being bought for our Hon^{ble} Ld be brought in and delivered either to y^e Waterbayliff or to any one of the Coron^{ts} of this Isle. And that all parts of the Rigging, Sailes, Cables, Ropes or any other goods or things whatsoever besides the timber & Iron afforesd be brought in and delivered to y^e sd Deemster Parr or m^r Murrey promising hereby that all psons shall have a third part or the full and Just value of a third part of whatever they shall so bring in betwixt this and the 24th Aprill Instr by way of salvage and as a reward for their so doing."

It was further declared that if a person were to retain any items after the 24 April then they would be treated as felons and punished severely. As an added incentive a reward was offered for informants who gave information on persons still concealing goods after 24 April. The reward was one third of the value of goods recovered.

"And I do hereby further ord^r and declare that whosoever shall bring in any Informacon to me or to any of our Hon^{ble} Principle officers of any concealm^t that shall be made after the sd 24th Aprill of any of the abovemenconed goods or things so they may be discovered such psons so informing shall have y^e like reward of a third part or the full value thereof given him as reward for he to discover."

Specific mention was given to a large piece of timber which had been stored at the gill at Ballagawne in the parish of Kirk Michael which was cut into pieces and carried away under the cover of darkness. Mention was also give to the ship's capstan¹, which was being stored at Parson Wattleworth's house in Peel and this too was taken away in the middle of the night. The persons responsible for these two acts were expressly excluded from the pardon. Rewards were offered for information leading to a successful prosecution of those responsible. Thirty shillings were offered as a reward for the recovery of the capstan and ten shillings for the other piece of timber missing from the mill at Ballagawne in Kirk Michael.

The Waterbailiff and Deemster Parr or Mr Murray were present at Peel on 24th April to collect goods brought in by people wishing to avoid punishment and to collect their reward of one third part of the value of the goods that they had found².

¹ The ship's capstan is a winch at the bow used to haul in the anchor chain

² Liber Scacc 1702 folio 68 Microfilm Spool RB449a – Manx Museum Library

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The Culprits Are Found

In the appeal for the surrender of any timbers, iron or goods from the Lucy made by Governor Cranstoun on 12 April specific mention was given to a large piece of timber lying at Ballagawne Gill which had apparently been sawn up and taken away during the cover of darkness. Ballagawne Gill is the wooded ravine [need to have a look at it] between the farmsteads of Ballagawne and Ballacranane now known as Glen Mooar in the parish of Kirk Michael.

A few days after the demise of the Lucy, William Clague, his son and William Caine found the timber in the sea at the strand below Ballagawne Gill. They pulled it from the sea and dragged it up the beach to the Gill where they left intended to leave it sufficiently above the high water mark for it not to be washed away. However, in reality William Caine later saw the tide pass a further 20 yards up the beach and past the timber¹.

Late one night very soon afterwards William Cannell, a carpenter, of Kirk Conchan², knocked at the door of John Cannell's house, at Ballacranane³ asking him to help move the timber from the Gill. John Cannell replied that he wouldn't assist. Undaunted William Cannell said he would cut the timber into manageable pieces so that he could carry each piece by himself. John Cannell advised him not to do it and to leave the timber alone. Unperturbed William Cannell then approached both John Cannell's father (also John, of Ballachrink) and his brother Phillip and his son also called Phillip, but all three men refused to help. In determined fashion William Cannell made for the location where the timber lay, with John Cannell following him at a distance. On reaching the timber, William Cannell cut the timber into two pieces, one of which he took with him and the other he hid in a ploughed field. Later, two of John Cannell's servants, James McBoy and William Corlett, went to the field, found the piece of timber and took it back to the house at Ballacranane to prevent William Cannell returning for it later.

It was later alleged by William Quayle that he was going with William Cannell upon the way towards Peel and heading in the direction of Phillip Cannell's house when they reached the piece of timber in the ploughed field. At this point William Cannell sold the piece of timber to William Quayle for nine pence⁴.

It is not known exactly when William Cannell was detained by the authorities but plenty of people were aware that he had taken one piece of the timber and the motivation of a reward would have undoubtedly caused one of them to inform on him. On 9 June he appeared in Court before Deemsters Jon Parr and Daniel Mylrea in the presence of Nicolas Thompson, coroner of Michael sheading. The jury was composed of six men, namely: Henry Woods, Thomas Quayle and Thomas Caine, all of Kirk Michael and Daniel Christian, John Christian and James Christian, all of Kirk Conchan. Given the weight of the evidence of witnesses and also his confession he was found guilty of feloniously cutting and taking away a piece of timber from Ballagawne Gill valued by the jury at 12 pence⁵.

However, William Cannell felt aggrieved by this decision and petitioned the Isle of Man's Governor to show mercy on him. William Cannell asserted that through his great folly and indiscretion he had taken the timber. In his defence he stated that in previous similar circumstances involving the taking of timber of no real value from wrecks the culprits were not treated with such severity by the courts as he had been. If he had known the severity of

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his treatment he would never have risked his reputation or the censure of the law or displeasure of the Government. Further he alleged that he had been convicted purely on the evidence of John Cannell senior and there was heavy suspicion that John Cannell and his son, contrary to their evidence, had in fact assisted him. His petition was further strengthened with the assertion that he had been hastily brought to trial and had no time to make a defence and produce such persons who upon oath would give, in his opinion, a truer account of the events that had occurred.

The petition then continues with a paragraph making his plea for the decision to be reversed:

"Yo^r petitioner therefore most humbly beseecheth that (out of yo^r sense of the general practice of the noblest of occasions, and yo^r clemency to forgive and prevent shame and punishm^t of the penitent and ignorant w^{ch} must ensue if mercy interpose not) would he graciously pardon him his fault that there be no more trial thereof be brought to further ignominie since he has lapsed the time to produce his evidences before he was indicted & expresses heartily sorrie for his offence, and will never be guilty of like again."

Finally, the petition ended with a number of subscribers certifying that they had never found dishonesty or misbehaviour in the petitioner before and recommend that he be shown mercy. The subscribers included a number of Members of the 24 Keys and "neighbouring gentlemen":

John Murrey, Thomas Joyner, Nick Oates, Phillip Moore, William Flexney, Thomas Kelly, Kames Christian, John Curphey, William Gell, James Parker, Mary Parker, Edmund Corlett, Nick Davies and James Oates⁶.

On 2 November, at a court of general gaol held at Castle Rushen, William Cannell's case was delayed until the next court in order to give time for him to apply to the Lord of Mann for a pardon as it was felt that he had conducted the crime through no felonious intent but rather through ignorance.

*"And in the meantime he the sd William Cannell is to give in good security for his personall appearance at the next generall Gaole whom either to pduce his pardon or abide his tryall in due Court of Lawe & in the interim to be of his good behaviour"*⁷.

The appeal on 12 April by Governor Cranstoun also mentioned that the Lucy's capstan had gone missing. Like the timber at Ballagawne Gill there were plenty of witnesses to the capstan's disappearance.

Late in the evening of 25 March Patrick Crellin senior, Patrick Crellin junior, William Quirk and Phinley Shimmin were going along the road from Peel to their homes when about half a mile outside of Peel he came across John Gell and William Shimmin with two horses and capstan lying on the road between the two horses. The horses were secured to the capstan by ropes and two hooks driven into the timber. When Patrick Crellin asked where it had come from they said they had found it at that spot on the road and it was no great matter of Patrick Crellin where it had come from. Later, John Gell and William Shimmin bade the group not to inform on them and they would be paid a sum of money⁸.

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On 8 June William Shimmin and John Gell were tried before Deemsters Jon Parr and Daniel Mylrea in the presence of Sylvester Ratcliffe, coroner of Glenfaba sheading and found guilty by the jury of stealing the capstan from the house of Reverend Wattleworth in the town of Peel. The capstan had been bought for the use of the Lord of Man and was valued by the jury at one shilling. The jury consisted on Phillip Crellin, Daniel Killey, John Crellin, ffinlo Gell, William Craine and Patrick Crellin^{9 10}.

¹ Enquest File 1702 folio 17 Microfilm Spool RB448 – Manx Museum Library

² Conchan is the older form of Onchan.

³ Modern spelling is Ballacarnane

⁴ Enquest File 1702 folio 16 Microfilm Spool RB448 – Manx Museum Library

⁵ Enquest File 1702 folio 15 Microfilm Spool RB448 – Manx Museum Library

⁶ Enquest File 1702 folio 11 Microfilm Spool RB448 – Manx Museum Library

⁷ Enquest File 1702 folio 18 Microfilm Spool RB448 – Manx Museum Library

⁸ Enquest File 1702 folio 30 Microfilm Spool RB448 – Manx Museum Library

⁹ Enquest File 1702 folio 31 Microfilm Spool RB448 – Manx Museum Library

¹⁰ Liber Scacc 1702 folio 7 Microfilm Spool RB449a – Manx Museum Library

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Prosecution Of Curate Christian

The families of Thomas Woods and Robert Cannell were further implicated in stealing wrecked goods when at a court held at Peel on 23 October John Cowley, of Kirk German, confessed to finding half a silk mant¹ on the beach at Patrickmas i.e. 17 March, the cloth being “flowered wth silver”. However, the case is notable for the involvement of Mr Christian, curate of Ballaugh who bought the piece of mant from John Cowley for “halfe fir² of plackett³...and halfe a Crown in money.”

John Cowley further confessed that upon complaining to Mr Christian afterwards that he had not received full worth for the mant, Mr Christian replied that if he (John Cowley) could get him the other half of it, then he would give John Cowley thirty shillings, but only once it had been handed to the curate. As it was the other half was in the possession of Grace Woods, daughter of Thomas Woods, and Jane Cannell, daughter of Robert Cannell. They had since sold the piece to Scottish peddlers for fifteen shillings.

He further informed the court that Alice Kneale, wife of Philip Kneale, of Ballakaighen, in Kirk German, found a side saddle on the strand that was fringed with gold gilt and that she sold it to Mr Christian for two shillings and a kishian⁴ of pease. When it became public knowledge that inquiry was to be made into the disappearance of shipwrecks goods from the Lucy, Mr Christian became nervous that he would be caught in possession of the saddle and he sent it back to the home of Alice Kneale. Later, when things had quietened down, he returned to the house of Alice Kneale and took the saddle into his possession for a second time.⁵

On 3 November Curate Christian (late of Ballaugh and then of Kirk Christ Rushen) was ordered before a court at Castle Rushen to explain his part in receiving stolen goods and being seen at the seen of the wreck with a hatchet in his hand. He was fined the sum of five pounds. However, he pleaded that he was unable to pay this fine and so it was reduced to 50 shillings (*Liber Scacc 1702 folio 16 – need to get from Museum and transcribe this*).

¹ A mant is a type of dress or gown.

² fir^t (full form is ferlet or ferlot) is a Manx dry measure amounting to 39 quarts.

³ Plackett was unthreshed oats and derives from the Manx word plaggard.

⁴ A kishian was a Manx measure similar to the English peck, which was equal to 8 quarts.

⁵ Liber Scacc 1702 folio 15 Microfilm Spool RB449a – Manx Museum Library

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Why Was The Lucy Off The Isle Of Man?

Very little is known about either the ship or her final voyage. Unfortunately, it was not under the remit of the clerk of the courts to record such facts when making records of the trials of those who illegally salvaged goods from the Lucy.

Michael Dolley¹ speculated that due to the gold dust found on the body of Captain Holt it would seem likely given the early eighteenth century that she was a ship engaged on the "Guinea trade" to West Africa.

His theory was further supported by the fact that, of the coins found on the strand, there were types deriving both from North Africa and Spain, regions through which the Lucy would have passed on her travels to and from West Africa.

That the Lucy was engaged in the trade with West Africa is feasible enough but why was a London registered ship and one manned by London-based officers in the Irish Sea off the Isle of Man? There is no doubt in the author's mind that she was merely off the Isle of Man in particular in order to afford shelter from winter storms. There is no suggestion in the historical record that the purpose of her journey was the delivery of goods or passengers to the Isle of Man. Therefore, it would seem reasonable that her destination was the port of Liverpool or perhaps one of the ports on the Clyde. A passenger with a Scottish surname is intriguing and perhaps hints to a Scottish connection.

It seems likely that the Lucy will not reveal her secrets for a while yet.

¹A Paranoimistic Sidelight on Several Centuries of Manx History – The Wreck Of The Lucy (1702), Michael Dolley.

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Appendices

- A. Map of Isle of Man
- B. Map of Kirk German Shoreline

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Inside Back Cover

The sea around the Isle of Man has proved to be the last resting place of many ships and their crews. The losses that have occurred have largely been forgotten but have left the Isle of Man with a rich legacy of shipwrecks. The CD-ROM "Dictionary of Shipwrecks off the Isle of Man" tells the story of the 1,163 recorded losses since 1644.

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Back Cover

Three hundred years ago the ship Lucy, of London was wrecked on the west coast of the Isle of Man just to the north of Peel. Little is known about the ship herself or her passengers or crew but much evidence of the wealth that she may have been carrying became evident in the weeks following her demise. Sourced from old court records the book gives a rare glimpse into the events following the wreck, events which touched the lives of both privileged and ordinary Manx men and women many of whom were tempted by the valuable goods that they salvaged from the shore.

About The Author

Manxman Adrian Corkill has been researching the shipwrecks around the Isle of Man for over 15 years and has amassed a database exceeding 1,200 shipwrecks since the mid-seventeenth. A keen scuba diver, Adrian has dived many of the wrecks that still lie in the clear waters around the Isle of Man and is still making new discoveries. First known for his "Dictionary of Shipwrecks off the Isle of Man", this is Adrian's first book dedicated to a single shipwreck.