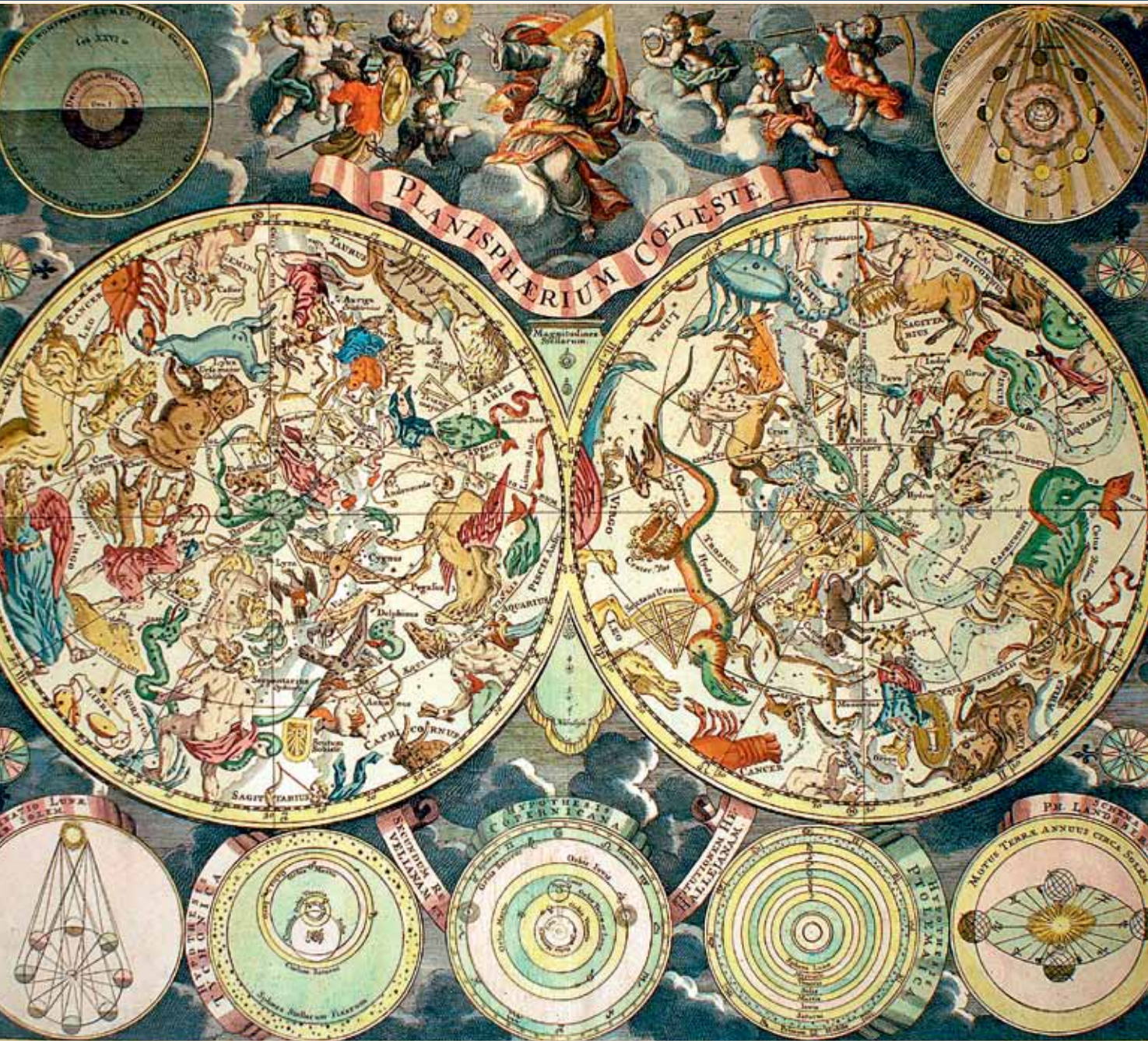


INTERNATIONAL MAP COLLECTORS' SOCIETY

# IMCS JOURNAL

SEPTEMBER 2018 No.154



FOR PEOPLE WHO LOVE MAPS



# JOURNAL OF THE INTERNATIONAL MAP COLLECTORS' SOCIETY

SEPTEMBER 2018 No.154 ISSN 0956-5728

## ARTICLES

- Planisphaerium Caeleste*: The publishing history of Seutter's star chart 23  
Krisztina Oláh

- Mapping Ezo: Representing the extent of Japan prior to the 31  
modern era  
Edward Boyle

- The English Pilot, The Fifth Book, Africa*, 1701–1792: A census 42  
Ljiljana Ortolja-Baird

## REGULAR ITEMS

- A Letter from the Chairman 3

- Editorial 5

- New Members 5

- IMCoS Matters 7

- Dates for your diary 7

- IMCoS/Helen Wallis award 7

- Chairman's report 9

- Treasurer's report 10

- Malcolm Young Lecture, 2018 11

*John Ogilby, his Nine Lives* by Alan Ereira

- 36th International Symposium, Manila – Hong Kong 19

- Mapping Matters 58

- Cartography Calendar 63

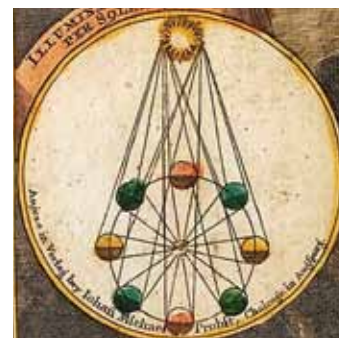
- Book Review 67

*Treswell's Survey of Sir Christopher Hatton's Lands in Purbeck 1585–6*

edited by Mark Forrest, with contributions by Jenny Halling

Barnard, Rose Mitchell, Martin Papworth

- Obituary Raymond Frostick (1931–2018) 68



Copy and other material for future issues should be submitted to:

**Editor** Ljiljana Ortolja-Baird, Email [Ljiljana.editor@gmail.com](mailto:Ljiljana.editor@gmail.com) 14 Hallfield, Quendon, Essex  
CB11 3XY United Kingdom **Consultant Editor** Valerie Newby **Designer** Catherine French  
**Advertising Manager** Jenny Harvey, 27 Landford Road, Putney, London SW15 1AQ  
United Kingdom, Tel +44 (0)20 8789 7358, Email [jeh@harvey27.demon.co.uk](mailto:jeh@harvey27.demon.co.uk)

Please note that acceptance of an article for publication gives IMCoS the right to place it on our website and social media. Articles must not be reproduced without the written consent of the author and the publisher. Instructions for submission can be found on the IMCoS website [www.imcos.org/imcos-journal](http://www.imcos.org/imcos-journal). Whilst every care is taken in compiling this *Journal*, the Society cannot accept any responsibility for the accuracy of the information herein.

Front cover Matthäus Seutter,  
*Planisphaerium Caeleste*. By permission  
of Charles Edwin Puckett,  
[www.cepuckett.com](http://www.cepuckett.com).

# THE ENGLISH PILOT THE FIFTH BOOK, AFRICA, 1701–1792

*A census*

Ljiljana Ortolja-Baird

*The International Map Collectors' Society was gifted a 1780 copy of The English Pilot, The Fifth Book Describing... the West-Coast of AFRICA. This article is the result of research undertaken in order to better understand its publishing history and its value in the light of recorded surviving examples.*

The fifth title of *The English Pilot* charts the west coast of Africa from the Straits of Gibraltar to the Cape of Good Hope. It was first published in 1701 by Jeremiah Seller (fl.1698–1705), son of John Seller, in partnership with Charles Price (1679?–1733), who described it as ‘a Work never before attempted in our Language’. Like other titles in the series, ‘Africa’ had a long shelf life with multiple editions, reaching into 1792, the year of its last known printing. Yet, despite its longevity there are few surviving copies. In 1949 R.V. Tooley, in what may be viewed as the first census of the fifth book, listed ten;<sup>1</sup> in 1973 Coolie Verner in the introduction to a facsimile publication of the first edition identified another three;<sup>2</sup> and in 1995 Adams and Waters noted a further six, all in US libraries.<sup>3</sup> This research has subsequently located an additional nine examples (see Table on pages 54–56).

## **The English Pilot**

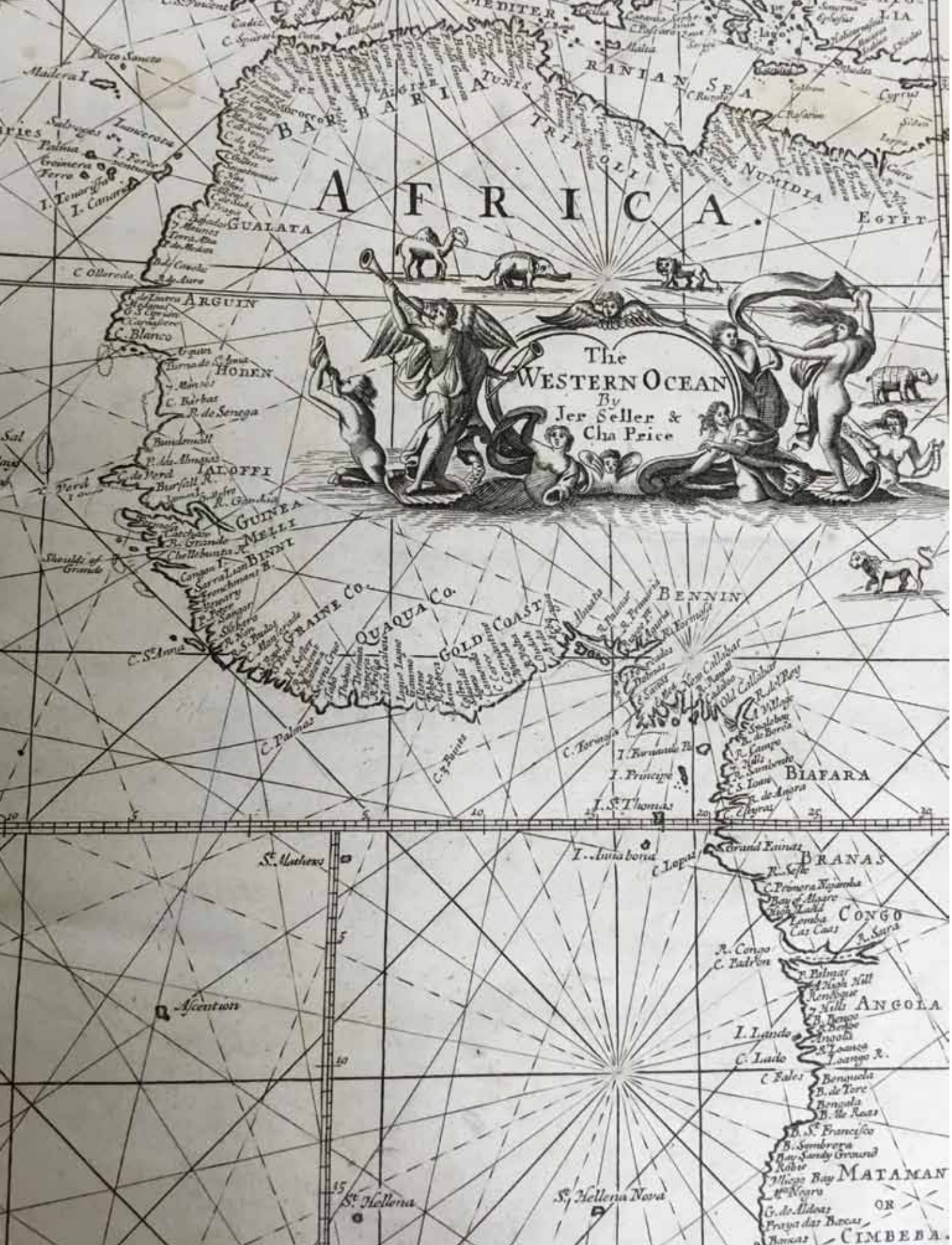
In the postscript of *Practical Navigation*, published in 1669 by John Seller (bap. 1632–1697), he announced that he was preparing a ‘Sea-Waggoner for the whole World, with *Charts and Draughts*’. His *Sea-Waggoner* would, he claimed, ‘be a work [as] was never yet performed by any’ and he called on all men of the sea to supply him with their knowledge and experience. Their participation would demonstrate the up-to-date geographical knowledge of his books,<sup>4</sup> unlike Joseph Moxon’s modest atlas *A Book of Sea-Platts* (1657) which, though boasting, ‘newly Corrected’ charts, clearly relied on Dutch sources.<sup>5</sup> Printed navigational knowledge available to English seamen was largely by

way of Dutch waggoners, some translated into English. At the time of Seller’s announcement, according to Sarah Tyacke, there were nineteen English text editions of Dutch atlases.<sup>6</sup> Publisher Richard Mount’s advertisement in Nathaniel Colson’s *The Mariners New Kalendar* (1701) announcing that he sold ‘all sorts of Mathematical and Sea-books in English’ confirms the persistent presence of untranslated Dutch books on navigation in the English market.<sup>7</sup> Seller’s endeavour was intended to break the monopoly held by the Dutch in the production of sea charts which, he argued, was an ‘impoverishment’ of the English economy and reputation as a seafaring nation. In light of the continued tensions between the Dutch and the English the promise of a new set of charts of the English coastline, and beyond, not dependent on Dutch sources, was probably welcome news. In France, Jean-Baptiste Colbert, Minister of Finance to Louis XIV, also frustrated by the domination of Dutch maritime publishers, agitated for superior French charts of the European coastline. His efforts culminated in 1693 with the publication of *Le Neptune François* (1693), a collection of charts of the European Atlantic coast from Norway to Gibraltar.

Seller fleshed out his ambitious project in the preface to *The English Pilot, Part I, Northern Navigation*. He explained: ‘the whole Work’ would be divided into ‘four Books’. The first would contain ‘the whole Northern Navigation’; the second the passage from the Channel to the Cape of Good Hope and include the Mediterranean Sea and its islands; the third book ‘the whole of Oriental Navigation’; and the fourth book ‘the Coast of America’.<sup>8</sup>

Seller’s project did not go exactly to plan. The first book was published in 1671, the same year he was conferred the title of ‘King’s Hydrographer’, and despite being granted royal protection – ‘forbidding any person to print any work, under any title, reprinting

Fig. 1 Jeremiah Seller and Charles Price, detail of ‘The Western Ocean’. This chart first appeared in c.1716 in the rogue first edition from which Seller and Price’s names were erased. It continued to be used throughout the lifetime of the pilot. This example is from their version of *The Fourth Part of the General English Pilot Describing ... the East Coast of America...*, 1703 which had been published originally in 1689 by Fisher and Thornton. 46 x 57.5cm. Reproduced with the permission of the President and Fellows of Trinity College, Oxford.





or counterfeiting, for thirty years, the works of John Seller, the English Pilot and the Sea Atlas...; also forbidding the import from beyond seas of any such books or maps, under names of the Dutch Waggoner or Lightning Column, or any other name'<sup>9</sup> – it is popularly claimed that he had financially over-extended himself.<sup>10</sup> Samuel Pepys as Secretary to the Navy Board, recognising the immense difficulty for a sole trader to underwrite the financial outlay for such a large project, argued for a state body to undertake large-scale surveying and chartmaking: 'Tis fit to consider the unreasonableness that any but a Prince should ever bear the charge which is necessary for the taking good description of Places, and making true Sea Charts'.<sup>11</sup> Whether to avoid insolvency, or otherwise, Seller embarked on restructuring his business. Thus, in 1677, he announced to readers of *The English Pilot*, *The Second Book*, *Mediterranean Sea*:

*that for better Management of my so Chargeable and Difficult an Undertaking, I have accepted the Assistance of my worthy Friends, Mr. William Fisher, Mr. John Thornton, Mr. John Colson, and Mr. James Atkinson, as my Copartners in the English Pilot, Sea Atlas, and in all Sea-Charts*'.<sup>12</sup>

Although his name remains prominently placed on the title page of this new venture, the cartouches in this, and subsequent joint publications, reflect Seller's new business arrangement. The consortium, largely comprising his competitors, was made up of printer/bookseller (Fisher), chartmakers (Seller and Thornton) and teachers of mathematics and navigation (Colson and Atkinson). The group disbanded after just two years and their shared capital of plates and stock was distributed among the five members. Seller lost the rights to a substantial part of his catalogue, the lion's share of the dispersal going to William Fisher who, with his apprentice Richard Mount, would over a relatively short time, become the sole publishers of all the books of *The English Pilot*. Seller's name continues to be erroneously associated with the series but, from this point forward, his involvement with it declined and he did not live to see his vision of a 'Sea-Waggoner for the 'whole world' realised. Thornton and Fisher completed *The English Pilot*, *West Indies* (1689). The lucrative trade offered by the American colonies made it a bestseller. In 1703 John Thornton produced a larger version of Seller's 1675 *The English Pilot*, *Oriental Navigation* using some of Seller's plates. However, it would be his younger son Jeremiah, in

partnership with Charles Price, a former apprentice and employee of Seller senior, who would publish the closing book of the series.

### The publishers

Jeremiah Seller was the youngest of four children and was apprenticed to his father in 1687. An early mention of him as a publisher and bookseller appears in 1696, the year before Seller senior's death. The title page of *A moderate computation of the expenses in provisions spent in the city of London and Westminster* announces: 'Printed for and are to be sold by Jeremiah Seller near the Hermitage Stairs', suggesting that he had established himself independently of his father. Unlike his older brother John, who left the maritime community of Wapping to set up shop in the City, first in Cheapside,<sup>13</sup> then later by St Paul's, Jeremiah remained closer to home.<sup>14</sup>

The Hermitage was a small harbour on the north bank of the Thames, east of Tower Hill. It was 'the centre...for over fifty ship chandlers together with dozens of slop sellers, mast makers, timber merchants and suppliers of anchors, sails, ropes, beer and biscuits', as well as master mariners.<sup>15</sup> Instrument makers Benjamin Macy and John and Walter Henshaw worked here. John Colson, an examiner at the Christ's Hospital Mathematical School, who had been part of the unsuccessful publishing consortium ran a school for students of mathematics and made his measurements of the 1689 lunar eclipse in his quest to determine longitude from the Hermitage area. It was, potentially, a promising location for the young publishing partnership.

Charles and Jeremiah joined forces after Seller senior's death in 1697, initially advertising themselves as 'Hydrographers', and on Queen Anne's accession to the throne in 1702 elevating their status to 'Hydrographers to the Queen'. Their trade card describes their business interest as 'Globes, Spheres, Mathematical books and Instruments for Sea and Land: with many other Curiosities in Gold, Silver, Steel, Brass, Ivory and Wood. And ye best Sea Plats, Charts & Prints, are Made and Sold'.<sup>16</sup> In small print, and squeezed in at the bottom of the text, is reference to an additional outlet: 'thire [their] Shopp next Door to the Fleece Tavern in Cornhill, London'. This was also the address of the premises of mapmaker John Senex between 1703 and 1706, with whom Price would later team up (Fig. 2).

Their catalogues reveal that as well as continuing to reissue works written, or initiated by John Seller, they published a number of books useful for navigation.