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Nicholas Dobrée was the author or draughtsman of three notable charts which included one of the whole of the Channel Island archipelago, a detailed one of Alderney and one showing Guernsey, Herm, Jethou and Sark. This is the chart of Guernsey and its adjacent islands. He was an Agent to the Admiralty and personally carried out the surveys and prepared the manuscript maps for the engravers. The quality of his work was considered excellent and his mapping of Guernsey to be far more accurate than his predecessors. The charts were recognised as the only exact and accurate ones available at the time of their publication; all others were thought to be inaccurate and not to be depended upon.

An engraved stone in the St Peter Port Town Church states that he devoted his cares to the security of the island navigation, the improvement of the Pier and the erection of the Town Hospital. Nicholas Dobrée was one of the principal benefactors of the Hospital which was completed in 1742. The profits from the publication of his three charts (£314) were given to the establishment.

This chart contains a vignette view of the "East Prospect of Castle Cornet. Vue du Château Cornet du Côte de l'Est". In the left-hand bottom corner there is an elaborate scrolled cartouche, decorated with allegorical figures and having the dedication: "To The Right Honourable the Lords Commissioners for executing the Office of the Lord High Admiral of Great Britain, etc. These Plates are most humbly Inscr'd by their Lordships' Most Humble and most Obedient Servant Nicholas Dobrée" and underneath "Engraved by Eman. Bowen, Geogr. To His Majesty". The scale is given as "Echelle de deux Milles chacun de 6,000 pieds". There are no references to longitude or latitude on this chart.

The map shows the Clos du Vale separated from the rest of the island by the Bray du Vale and linked to it by the Pont du Vale. Each of the parish churches is represented by a small engraved sketch. Other points of vantage or possible landmarks include several windmills and watch-houses.

The amount of hydrographic information is exceptionally detailed. A rosette showing the run of the tides is in the top left-hand corner and arrows indicate the direction of the flood tide around the island. Rocks, reefs and sandbanks are shown and named and soundings in fathoms are liberally given. Safe passageways into the harbour of St Peter Port are clearly marked on the chart and show the optimum courses to take in order that the hazards to navigation are avoided.

Emanuel Bowen (fl. 1714 - 67), map and print-seller, was engraver to George II and to Louis XV of France and worked in London from about 1714 onwards producing some of the best and most attractive maps of the century. He had plans for completing a major County Atlas but, finding the task beyond his means, joined with Thomas Kitchin to publish The Large English Atlas. Many of the maps were issued individually from 1749 onwards and the whole atlas was not finally completed until 1760. Apart from his county maps and atlases of different parts of the world, he also issued (with John Owen, fl. 1720) a book of road maps based, as was usual at that time, on Ogilby but again incorporating his own style of historical and heraldic detail. In spite of his royal appointments and apparent prosperity, he died in poverty and his son, who carried on the business, was no more fortunate and died in a Clerkenwell workhouse in 1790.



Philip and Thomas de Soumerez set out with Jason to circumnavigate the globe

Fred Inoby's swimming pool opens in Godman's Fields, London

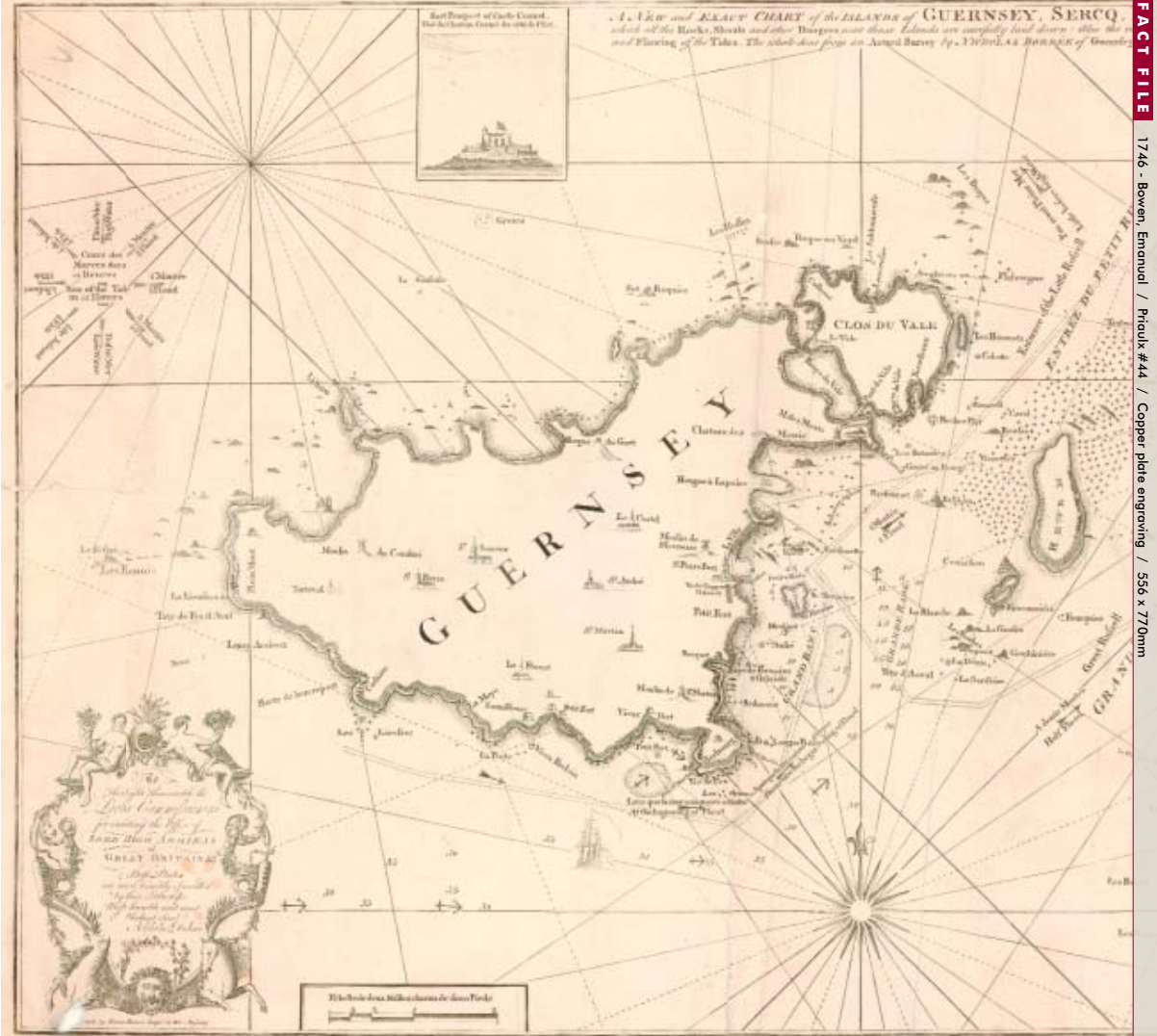
HMS Victory is wrecked on the Casquets with a loss of 1100 men

Emanuel Bowen maps

Simon Fraser becomes the last man to be officially beheaded in England

Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, author of Faust, is born

A New and Exact Chart of the Islands of Guernsey, Sercq, Herm & Jethou; in which all the Rocks, Shoals and other Dangers near those Islands are carefully laid down: Also the various Soundings, and the Ebbing and Flowing of the Tides. The whole done from an Actual Survey by Nicholas Dobrée of Guernsey esq., Agent to the Admiralty.



FACT FILE 1746 - Bowen, Emanuel / Frivolx #44 / Copper plate engraving / 556 x 70mm