

FOUR REASONS THE SITE HASN'T BEEN THOROUGHLY INVESTIGATED

1) Many landing site investigators have been led to believe that Drake “couldn’t have found San Francisco Bay because of the heavy fog” that was reported at the time of their arrival. This theory has been heavily promoted by the Drake Navigators Guild and as one of the key points in supporting their thesis that Drake landed on the coast in Drakes Estero at Drakes Bay. Supporters of other coastal sites have mostly agreed.

Drake was a master navigator who, with the possible help from stolen Spanish coastal charts and lifting fog, could have visually detected the 3-mile opening to San Francisco Bay and then observed the wind and tides. With the assistance of their smaller ship, known today as “Tello’s Frigate”, Drake could have first explored The Bay without endangering the Golden Hinde.



2) I’ve heard people ask, “If Francis Drake had discovered San Francisco Bay, it would have been a major discovery. Why wouldn’t he have told the world that he found and explored it?”.

Here are some of my thoughts on this important question:

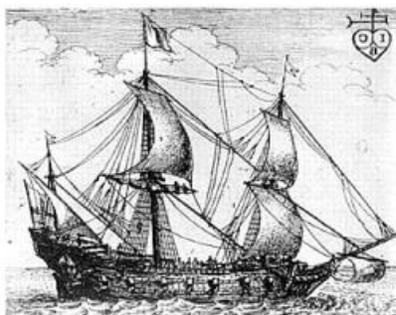
IF FRANCIS DRAKE HAD FOUND “SAN FRANCISCO BAY”, WHY WOULDN'T HE HAVE TOLD THE WORLD?

This is a question that has been asked by many who have examined the Drake California landing site mystery. In my opinion, there is no question that, considering the many raids made on the Spanish before the 1579 California careening of “The Golden Hinde” (and Drake’s reputation to the Spanish as a “pirate”), any major claim for England made by Drake, such as the discovery of what is now “San Francisco Bay”, would have been completely disregarded by Spain. The bay could have then been seized, occupied and defended by the Spanish subjects of King Phillip II. It potentially could have become a major trade hub for Portuguese Manila galleons.

It must be noted that there is good circumstantial evidence that about 14 men were left (with their share of the treasure) at Nova Albion because the smaller ship was not seaworthy to cross the Pacific. The excessive weight aboard the Golden Hinde would have put the expedition in serious danger. It is logical to conclude that announcing the discovery to the world would have put those former crew members - and the Miwok natives who he became very close with - in peril from the Spanish.

Drake’s claim for England of “Nova Albion” was the first major land claim for England, making it the beginning of what would become the British Empire. When Drake and his crew returned to England after being gone for nearly three years, it was by far the greatest achievement to date by any Englishman. Yet, by order of Queen Elizabeth I, no one who took part in that adventure was allowed to discuss the details of their journey *under pain of death*.

This is a very strong clue, in my opinion, that Drake discovered something extremely important that couldn’t be shared with the world at that time.



3) Many investigators have dismissed upper Richardson Bay (in San Francisco Bay) as being too shallow to allow a safe approach to the Strawberry Cove landing site by the Golden Hinde. I had to be convinced that landing at Strawberry Cove would have been accessible. It's important to note that the depth of Richardson Bay has changed dramatically over the past 150 years.

Richardson Bay was much deeper before logging in the mid-19th to early 20th centuries caused severe soil erosion in nearby hills, resulting in a heavy silt buildup near its upper regions. Residue from hydraulic mining during the gold rush, and other waste over the years, affected the entire San Francisco Bay as well. These factors brought several feet of sediment into Richardson Bay. Estimates have made Richardson Bay between 6ft.- 30ft. deeper, depending upon the location, before the mid-19th century. When Drake was here, there was a natural, deep channel that led directly to the cove (a shallower version is still there today), It could have been safely detected at high tide by the smaller scout ship, that probably had no more than a 6ft. draft. The Golden Hinde had a draft of approx. 13ft. fully laden and 9ft. without cargo. I have estimated, using charts, that, at high tide (+ approx. 4ft.), the Golden Hinde would have not had a problem getting into the Strawberry Cove of 1579.

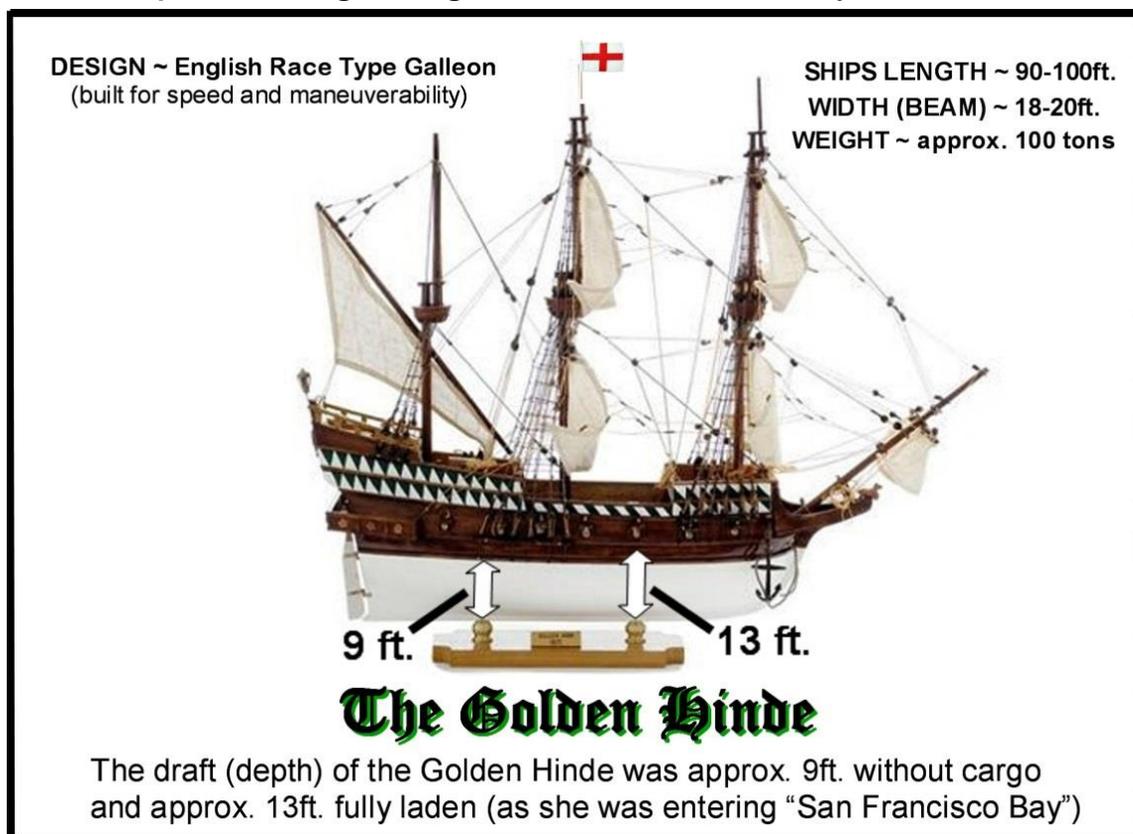


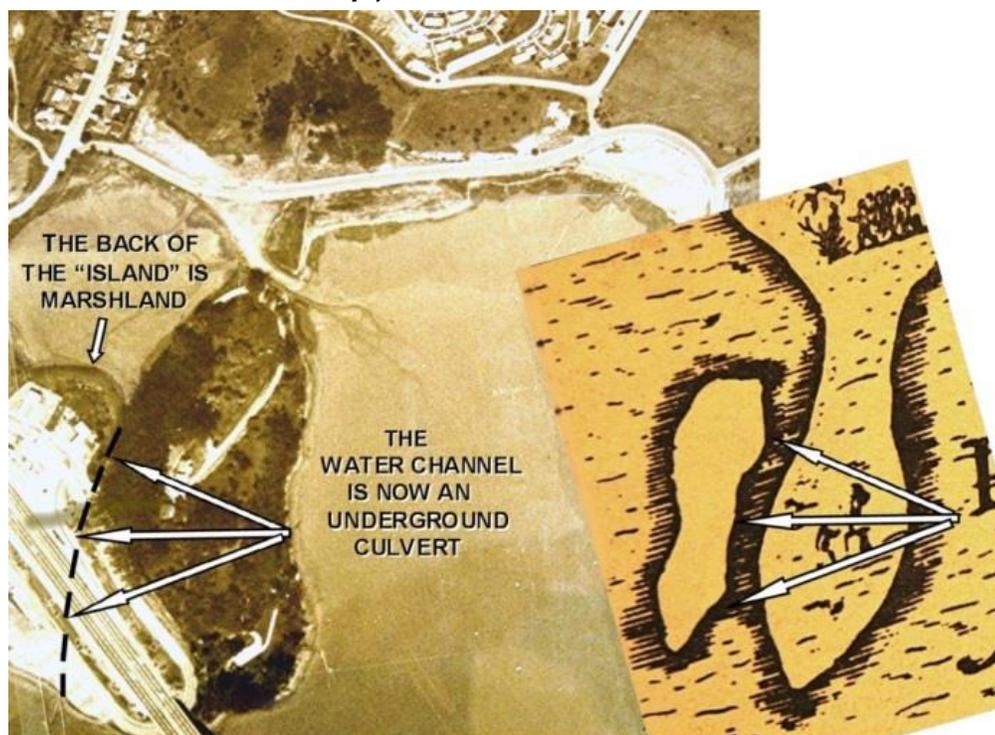


Figure 10
C&GS Map of Richardson Bay (1903)

COVE CHART FROM 1903 SHOWS DEPTH (IN FATHOMS) AT LOW TIDE. FATHOMS ARE TRADITIONALLY MEASURED BY THE LENGTH OF OUTSTRETCHED ARMS (APPROX. 6 FT.)



4) The much-searched-for western “island” indicated on the Hondius “Portus Plan” inset is marshland. Bay marshland would not be represented on any standard land map looked at by investigators. Therefore, nothing could have been identified as the “island” shown on the Drake map. Since the late 1920s, the area had been landfilled and now only a small portion of the marshland area (accurate in size and shape to the Portus Plan map) is still visible.





THIS FLAT MARSHLAND “ISLAND” IS SIMILAR TO THE PRE- 1920s MARSHLAND AREA ONCE FOUND TO THE WEST OF THE PROPOSED LANDING SITE. IT IS ABOUT A QUARTER-MILE FROM THE STRAWBERRY COVE DISCOVERY SITE.

