



Christian P.P. Lemée

## The Renaissance Shipwrecks from Christianshavn

An archaeological and architectural study of large carvel vessels in  
Danish waters, 1580-1640

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Museum of Denmark. Volume 6 in the series *Ships and Boats of the North*.

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The main aim of this study has been to discover the specific carvel  
shipbuilding methods used in north-west Europe in the Renaissance  
period. The analysis is based on a group of ship-finds excavated under  
the direction of the author in Copenhagen in 1996 and 1997.

A total of eight wrecks were discovered and recorded on the former  
premises of the Burmeister & Wain (B&W) ship engine factory in the  
Christianshavn quarter of Copenhagen. Five of them were the remains  
of large carvel-built vessels dating within the reigns of the two Danish  
kings Frederik II (1559-1588) and Christian IV (1588-1648) and thus  
representing a unique collection of Renaissance ship-types used in  
Danish waters. Most of the large ships were Dutch-built.

The analysis of these finds combines the detailed recording of  
sections of four of the ships with their physical reconstruction in the  
shape of scale models. These steps result in a sound understanding of  
how flush-planked ships were designed and built according to the  
shell-based concept.

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1. The B&W site: historical and archaeological evidence
2. Carvel shipbuilding in a historical context
3. Methods of investigation:  
excavation, documentation and reconstruction
4. The B&W shipwrecks: archaeological analyses  
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*B&W 5, a Dutch-built flute or pinas*  
*B&W 2, a Dutch-built Danish East Indiaman*  
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*B&W 3, a clinker-built vessel*  
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*B&W 8, a carvel-built ship's boat*
5. Results and discussion

Summaries in English, Dutch, French, Danish and  
German language.

### From the Foreword:

"The merit of Lemée's study  
lies first and foremost in the  
uncompromising methodo-  
logy in archaeological  
source-criticism: recorded  
and recordable phenomena  
are analysed and interpreted  
through transparent and  
systematic technical  
experimentation, ... thereby ...  
revealing the concepts that  
governed the ship-building  
technology of the day, as well  
as its flexibility."

*Thijs J. Maarleveld*, University  
of Southern Denmark

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SHIPS AND BOATS OF THE NORTH VOLUME 6

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