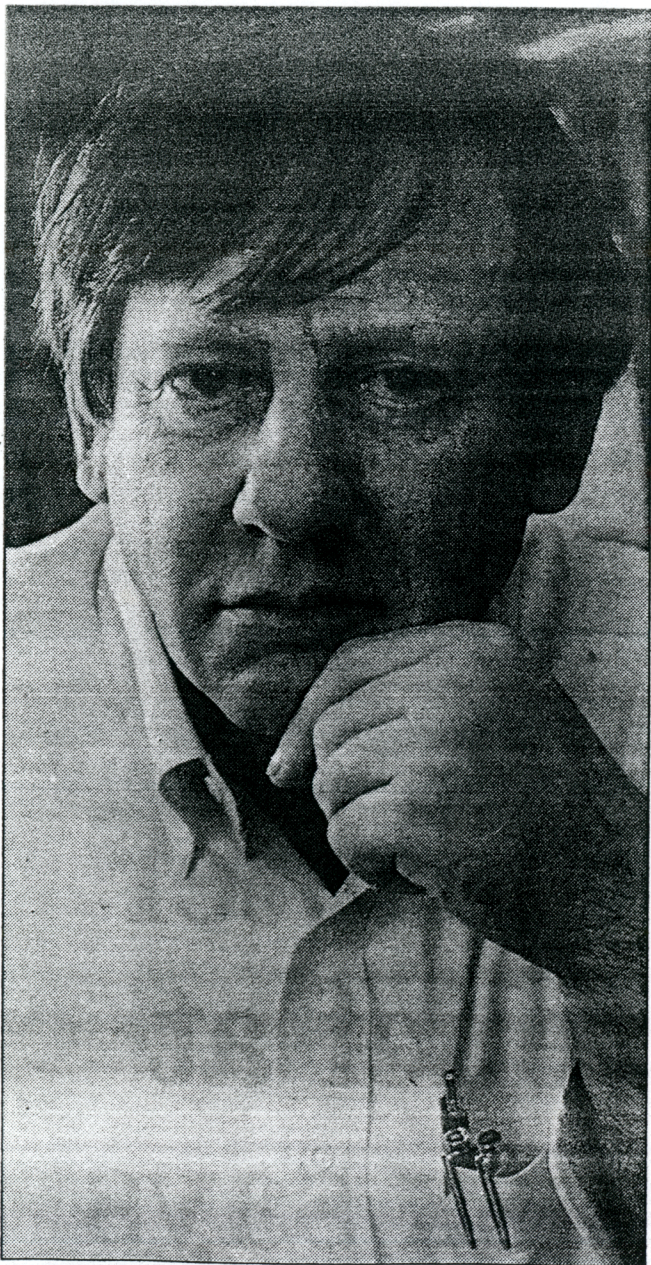


Simple sketch, 2 - - - ?

S. WARD

# Architects in battle over the Mary Rose



Professor Christopher Alexander: "Chosen by Charles"

PRINCE Charles is at the centre of a row between two world-renowned architects, both of whom claim the right to design a museum for the remains of the Tudor warship Mary Rose, which sank 450 years ago.

High Court action and a disciplinary inquiry by the Royal Institute of British Architects into the conduct of one of its most eminent members appear inevitable. The row follows a decision by the Mary Rose Trust to appoint Sir Michael Hopkins, designer of the new Parliamentary building and the Glyndebourne Opera House extension, to advise them on a design for a combined ship hall and museum in Portsmouth for the remains of the Mary Rose, which were raised in 1982.

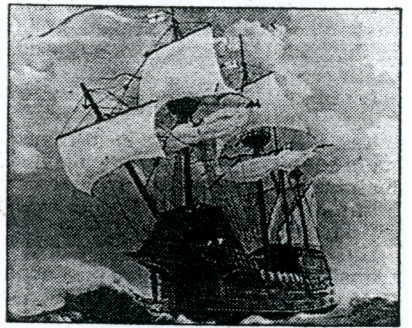
The new building forms part of a submission to the Millennium Commission by Portsmouth Harbour, asking for £49 million towards a project worth a total of £113 million.

However, another architect, Professor Christopher Alexander, claims that he has been the Mary Rose museum's architect since the Trust's president, Prince Charles, chose him in 1991.

Professor Alexander, of the University of California, is one of the Prince's closest architectural confidants and a founder of his Institute of Architecture. He says the Mary Rose Trust is acting



"Annoyed": But Prince Charles is said to feel unable to intervene in the fight over the museum for the Mary Rose, right



by MIRA BAR-HILLEL  
Property Correspondent

illegally by ignoring a valid contract with him and he has written to the Millennium Commission advising them of impending legal action.

He has also made a formal complaint to the RIBA, citing their code of professional conduct which states that one architect must not "oust" another.

Sir Michael, holder of the Royal Gold Medal for architecture, says the Trust has given him a written assurance that "there is no existing contractual relationship between the Trust and any other architect in connection with this project".

Professor Alexander spent almost two years designing the Mary Rose museum in close consultation with the Trust, for which he was paid almost £250,000. The director of the Prince's Institute of Architecture, Dr Richard John, said it was a "marvellous design".

Prince Charles himself is an avid supporter of Professor Alexander's design and is said to be angry and annoyed with the Trust's conduct but feels unable, as its president, to speak out.

The Mary Rose Trust continues to insist it has no relationship with Professor Alexander. It has refused to explain its position to his solicitors, to the president of the RIBA or to the Evening Standard.

The impasse may only be

resolved in court. Professor Alexander's legal adviser is in no doubt that the Trust's contract with him was never terminated and that the assurance given to Sir Michael was incorrect.

If this is proven, Sir Michael could find himself in an awkward position. Penalties for breaching the RIBA code include reprimand, suspension and even expulsion.

Concern is growing in Portsmouth that its entire harbour development proposal could be jeopardised by the row.

Professor Alexander's solicitor has given the Trust until the end of the week to respond to his client's claims or face immediate legal action. The Trust declines to comment.