THE INFRASTRUCTURE AND PURPOSE OF AN ENGLISH MEDIEVAL FLEET IN THE FIRST PHASE OF THE HUNDRED YEARS' WAR (1338-1340)

by Bryce Lyon

In 1994 heads of state, politicians, and veterans of World War II gathered on the coast of Normandy and in England to commemorate the fiftieth anniversary of D-Day, that day of 6 June 1944 when allied troops landed on the Normandy coast to begin the allied invasion of western Europe. Much has been spoken and written about the valor and sacrifices of the allied soldiers, sailors, and aviators and about the incredible logistical operations involved in the assembling in England of troops, armaments, supplies, and ships required for transport and for engagement that entailed the labor of millions for well over a year. An achievement that bears comparison is Edward III's invasion of western Europe some 600 years ago on 16 July 1338. Although Edward's initial invasion and campaign in the Low Countries did not achieve the allied success of 1944, the logistics were as incredible given the primitive means of transportation and communication, the dearth of technology and advanced weapon systems, and the small size of medieval ships. It was the most ambitious undertaking by an English king up until that time.

To examine the naval infrastructure involved to mount Edward's invasion is the intention of this study. But, first, some observations about medieval naval warfare need to be made. That historians of ancient and medieval warfare have written little about naval operations is easily explained. Except for the naval battles of Salamis and Actium and those of the Roman Republic against Carthage, whatever other naval engagements occurred in Greek and Roman history were peripheral to the outcome of campaigns and wars. Empires were won and lost on the results of land engagements. Those leaders who achieved fame in military history excelled in the strategy and tactics of ground forces, the most notable being, of course, Alexander the Great, Hannibal, and Julius Caesar. With the disintegration of the Roman Empire in the West and control of the Mediterranean Sea passing to Islam during the seventh and eighth centuries, western Europe became partially landlocked and, with its institutions of seignorialism and feudalism, lived for some centuries on an agrarian economy. As Islam expanded, the Arabs constructed a fleet that gradually deprived Byzantium of its hegemony in the eastern Mediterranean. And yet, although an Arab fleet destroyed a Byzantine fleet in 655, a joint Arab naval assault and siege

of some twelve months in 717 failed to take Constantinople.[1]

The German tribes that occupied the Roman provinces in the West did so by their advances over land. Charles Martel became known as the savior of western Christendom because of his victory over the Saracens at Poitiers in 732. Charlemagne forged a new empire by his land campaigns. Otto the Great restored the Holy Roman Empire by his victories over the Hungarians and his campaigns in eastern Germany. William the Conqueror acquired England by his victory at Hastings. During the Middle Ages mounted knights, archers, and infantry with their pikes and halberds were the warriors who determined the course of battles and sieges. France gained its thirteenth-century hegemony over western Europe by its victory over the continental allies of England at Bouvines in 1214. In 1302 the Flemish pikemen shocked the chivalry of western Europe by their bloody triumph over the French knights at Courtrai. The celebrated victories of the English over the French during the Hundred Years' War were all achieved in land battles. The one exception to these victories by land was the naval engagement at Sluis in June of 1340 when an English fleet battered a French fleet, giving Edward III a firmer control over the North Sea and English Channel. In the late fifteenth century the strong Burgundian state ended with the humiliating defeats of Charles the Bold by the Swiss infantry at the battles of Morat (1476) and Nancy (1477).[2]

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[1] The principal task of the Roman navy after the establishment of the Empire was combatting piracy. The best study is still that of C. G. Starr, *The Roman Imperial Navy 31 B. C.-A. D. 324,* 2d ed., Cambridge, 1960. See also W. L. Rogers, *Greek and Roman Naval Warfare,* Annapolis, 1939; R. H. Dolley, "The Warships of the Later Roman Empire," *Journal of Roman Studies,* XXXVI, 1948; D. Kienast, *Untersuchungen zu den Kriegsflotten der römischen Kaiserzeit,* Bonn, 1966; L. Casson, *Ships and Seamanship in the Ancient World,* Princeton, 1971; J. Rougé, *La marine dans l'antiquité,* Paris, 1975; and Lawrence Keppis, "The Army and Navy," in *The Cambridge Ancient History: The Augustan Empire, 43 B. C.-A. D. 69,* 2d ed., Cambridge, 1996, X, 371-396. A recent and succinct account of land and naval warfare is by Michael Brett, "Warfare, Islamic," *Dictionary of the Middle Ages,* XII, 1989, 551-554. Brett concludes his account by writing that "few great naval battles took place. After Islam controlled the Mediterranean most naval engagements were raids. From the eleventh century, those raids turned to piracy by enterprising privateers. The navies of the dynasties of Egypt, North Africa, and Spain were normally used in support of land campaigns, especially those involving the blockade or relief of a coastal city" (p. 553). For more comprehensive studies see Maurice Canard, "Les expéditions des Arabes contre Constantinople dans l'histoire et dans la légende," *Journal Asiatique,* CCVIII, 1926; Vassilios Christides, "Naval Warfare in the Eastern Mediterranean," *Graeco-Arabica,* III, 1984; and A. M. Fahmy, *Muslim Seapower in the Eastern Mediterranean,* London, 1966. For Byzantine naval warfare see W. E. Kaegi, "Warfare, Byzantine," *Dictionary of the Middle Ages,* XII, 1989, 547-550, and *Some Thoughts on Byzantine Military Strategy,* Chicago, 1983. Also useful is A. R. Lewis, *Naval Power and Trade in the Mediterranean, A. D. 500-1100,* Princeton, 1951.

[2] The best account of medieval warfare in the West remains that of J. F. Verbruggen, *De Krijgskunst in West-Europa in de Middeleeuwen (IXe tot Begin XIVe*

THE ENGLISH FLEET (1338-1340)

When the West began to retake the Mediterranean from Islam during the eleventh century the Genoese, Pisans, and Venetians used their ships primarily in pillaging and piratical thrusts against Islamic ships and ports. Subsequently their ships were used to transport troops and supplies that led to such victories in land engagements and those won by the intrepid Normans in southern Italy and Sicily. When the Crusaders went to the Middle East to regain the Holy Land many went by land routes and the others took ships with no intention of engaging the Saracens on water. Throughout the Crusades ships were regarded as a means of transportation for soldiers, horses, and supplies. The convoluted Fourth Crusade resulting in the capture of Constantinople occurred only because Venetian ships transported and supplied the French crusaders. Throughout the Middle Ages ships were primarily used as a means of transportation.[3]

Not until the sixteenth century did ships become valued as prime instruments of warfare, essential for offense as well as for defense. Hastening this development were advances in navigational instruments, the use of cannon, and the age of exploration which triggered competition for overseas colonies and riches. Engagements by sea now became decisive and often dictated the outcome of wars. The triumph of the Spanish and Venetians over the Ottoman Turks at the naval battle of Lepanto in 1572 halted the Ottoman surge westward. The destruction of the Spanish Armada by the English in 1588 was a mortal blow to Philip II and made England the preeminent naval power in the West, a position it almost lost to the enterprising Dutch in the seventeenth century. The military importance of seapower, as demonstrated in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries and confirmed in the following centuries, forced historians of war to broaden their perspective and to give naval warfare a prominent place in their accounts.

It was but natural that even in England, for so long the paramount naval power in the world, scholarly research on naval history concentrated on the sixteenth

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Eeuw), Brussels, 1954. An English translation by Summer Willard and S. C. M. Southern appeared as *The Art of Warfare in Western Europe During the Middle Ages,* Amsterdam, 1977. The definitive study on the battle of Courtrai is Verbruggen's *De Slag der Gulden Sporen: Bijdrage tot de Geschiedenis van Vlaanderens Vrijheidsoorlog, 1297-1305,* Antwerp, 1952. For other studies on medieval warfare see Hans Delbrück, *Geschichte der Kriegskunst im Rahmen der politischen Geschichte,* 2[2] ed., Berlin, 1923, Vols. I-VI. It has been translated as *History of the Art of War Within the Framework of Political History.* A later survey is that of Ferdinand Lot, *L'art militaire et les armées au moyen âge en Europe at dans le Proche Orient,* Paris, 1946, Vols. I-II. For a brief account with an extensive bibliography see John Beeler, "Warfare, Western European," *Dictionary of the Middle Ages,* XII, 1989, 554-569.

[3] See particularly H. C. Krueger, "The Italian Cities and the Aralis Before 1095," in K. M. Setton and M. W. Baldwin, eds., *A History of the Crusades,* 2[d] ed., Philadelphia, 1969, I, 40-53; J. H. Pryor, "Transportation of Horses by Sea During the Era of the Crusades: Eighth Century to 1285 A. D.," *Mariner's Mirror,* LXIV, 1982.

and subsequent centuries. Neglected until recently were studies on English naval history during the Middle Ages.[4] Since World War II an increasing number of scholars have produced some fine studies on English medieval shipbuilding, the types and sizes of vessels, the military and logistical functions of ships, naval tactics, the growth and location of ports, the embryo of a royal fleet, and the numbers and types of naval personnel. These studies have enlarged our understanding of English medieval naval history but have not revised the consensus that English medieval ships were primarily designed and used as a means of transportation. When the English kings used ships during hostilities they did so to transport soldiers, horses, war materiel, and supplies overseas to places where land campaigns and sieges were planned or already underway.

Some of the most meticulous research on English naval history in the late thirteenth and fourteenth centuries has recently been done by Timothy J. Runyan who, in a series of articles, has provided a detailed account of the types of vessels, their size and tonnage, the complements of crews and their remuneration, the arresting of merchant ships for royal naval service, the logistics of outfitting a fleet, the problems of transporting men, horses, and supplies overseas, the small cadre of royal ships, naval tactics, and the ports from which ships and sailors came.[5] Although insisting that command of the sea was essential for the continental campaigns of Edward III, Runyan emphasized that Edward's ships were primarily used for transportation. In the one major naval battle during the

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[4] The dearth of studies on English medieval naval history is evidenced in E. B. Graves's new edition of Charles Gross, *A Bibliography of English History to 1485,* Oxford, 1975. Studies on land warfare greatly outnumber those on naval. Except for a few articles, prior to World War II the principal studies were the first 2 volumes of N. H. Nicolas, *A History of the Royal Navy,* London, 1847; W. L. Clowes, *The Royal Navy: A History from the Earliest Times to the Present,* London, 1897-1903, Vols. I-VII; F. W. Brooks, *The English Naval Forces, 1199-1272,* London, 1933; and K. M. E. Murray, *The Constitutional History of the Cinq Ports,* London, 1935.

[5] "Ships and Mariners in Later Medieval England," *Journal of British Studies,* XVI, 1977, "Ships and Fleets in Anglo-French Warfare, 1337-1360," *The American Neptune,* XLVI, 1986, 91-99, "The Organization of Royal Fleets in Medieval England," in Runyan, ed., *Ships, Searfaring, and Society: Essays in Maritime History,* Detroit, 1987, and "Naval Logistics in the Late Middle Ages: The Example of the Hundred Years' War," in J. A. Lynn, ed., *Feeding Mars: Logistics in Western Warfare from the Middle Ages to the Present,* Oxford, 1993, pp. 79-100. Also useful are A. R. Lewis and Runyan, *European Naval and Maritime History, 300-1500,* Bloomington, Ind., 1985; R. W. Unger, *The Ship in the Medieval Economy,* London, 1980, "Ships and Shipbuilding, Northern European," *Dictionary of the Middle Ages,* XI, 1988, 238-245. For types of ships see Gillian Hutchinson, *The Archaeology of Medieval Britain,* London, 1995; and Ian Friel, *The Good Ship, Ships, Shipbuilding and Technology in England, 1200-1520,* London, 1995. For the naval forces of the Burgundian dukes see Jacques Paviot, *La politique navale des ducs de Bourgogne, 1384-1482,* Lille, 1995; and Louis Sicking, *Zeemacht en onmacht. Maritieme politiek in de Nederlanden (1488-1558),* Leiden, 1996.

Hundred Years' War, Edward III's triumph over the French off the Flemish coast at Sluis on 24 June 1340 did give the English command of the Channel for years to come.[6]

What follows refines Runyan's figures on numbers of ships and sailors, the types of ships, and the ports from which they came. A recent computer-assisted study of 1,291 English ships in the years between 1337 and 1360 provided some useful data for Runyan's latest work. Designed to record entries of a ship's name, home port, size, owner, master, as well as such data as whether it was a royal ship, the ship's activities, and sources of references, the program is, as Runyan readily admitted, not without weaknesses. It is frequently impossible to determine how many ships with the same names such as *St. Mary, La Nicholas, la Seinte Mariecogg, la Michel, la Godbyete,* etc. were discrete ships because often the names of the masters and home ports are not given. Is a ship with the name of *St. Mary* but with no other data the *St. Mary* from the port of Lynn, or the port of Southampton, or some other port? Runyan notes that the computer program provides 57 references to a ship called *La Nicholas* (named after the patron saint of sailors), but without home ports listed it is impossible to ascertain how many of these were different ships. It is possible that a *La Nicholas* referred to 10 times is the same ship. Given this possibility, Runyan frankly admitted that his research "is not comprehensive enough to date to eliminate such repetition and ascertain the exact number of discrete vessels among the 1,291 entries."[7]

Most of the data for this computer program was derived from the Calendar of Close Rolls and the Calendar of Patent Rolls for 1337-1360. Other pertinent records such as the wardrobe books were not used, probably because of their bulk and that only two have been edited and published. Revealing, therefore, is an examination of the wardrobe book of the keeper William de Norwell from 12 July 1338 to 27 May 1340.[8] A part of the royal household, the wardrobe was almost always with the king and was readily available to him. This is why Edward III relied primarily on the wardrobe to finance his various campaigns, whether in Scotland, the Low Countries, or France. From this wardrobe book one learns what Edward III spent on his war efforts. Listed are the numbers and types of soldiers and sailors as well as their wages and duration of service; the numbers and types of vessels with the names of their masters and their home

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[6] Runyan concluded that "had the English lost at Sluys and not been able to carry the war to France, there may not have been a Crécy, and the scene of battle might have centered more on the Channel or perhaps even in England" (*Feeding Mars,* p. 93).

[7] *Ibid.*, pp. 86-87, 96.

[8] Bryce and Mary Lyon, eds., *The Wardrobe Book of William de Norwell, 12 July 1338 to 27 May 1340,* Brussels, 1983. Prior to the edition of this wardrobe book the only other one was the *Liber Quotidianus Contrarotulatoris Garderobae anno regni Regis Edwardi primi vicesimo octavo. A. D. 1299 and 1300* edited by John Topham in 1787 and published by the Society of Antiquaries of London.

ports; the numbers and kinds of horses; the materiel of war; and all other expenses for outfitting and supplying an army and a fleet.[9] The wardrobe book of Norwell is one of the most comprehensive and useful because it meticulously records the expenditures of Edward III on his Low Country campaign against Philip VI of France for 2 years of the 26 month campaign.

The wardrobe book of Norwell records total expenditures of 410, 391 lb. 4s. 4d. Of this sum Edward III's campaign in the Low Countries accounted for a bit more than 382,000 lb., with the rest being spent on the maintenance of the royal household and other sundry items such as gifts, alms, and support of the hunting and fowling establishments. For his campaign Edward assembled on the eastern coast at Orwell and Great Yarmouth 291 different ships and their masters to transport his force to Antwerp. These ships plus another 80 or so also assisted in other operations during the overseas campaign. Comprising this fleet were 12,263 masters, constables, sailors, pages, clerks, and carpenters whose remuneration came to 4,797 lb. 11s. 6d. It transported 2,720 earls, bannerets, knights, squires, men-at-arms, and hobelars; 5,550 mounted and unmounted archers; 4,614 horses; and the king's and queen's households comprising over 500 personnel.[10] As these figures indicate the scope of the preparations and logistics for transporting such a large force overseas was tremendous; in fact it was the most ambitious overseas undertaking by an English king up to this time. No wonder Edward had to postpone his original plan to go overseas to the Low Countries in 1337 as the necessary ships, personnel, and supplies had not been assembled. Not until 14 July 1338 did he board the royal ship *la Cristofre* at Orwell, and then the ships and forces assembled at Orwell and Great Yarmouth set sail on 16 July across the North Sea, arriving at Antwerp on 22 July.[11]

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[9] For the functions of the wardrobe see T. F. Tout, *Chapters in the Administrative History of Mediaeval England,* Manchester, 1920-1933, Vols. I-VI; E. B. Fryde, *The Book of Prests of the King's Wardrobe for 1294-5,* Oxford, 1962; Charles Johnson, "The System of Account in the Wardrobe of Edward I," *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society,* VI, 1923, 50-72; J. H. Johnson, "The King's Wardrobe and Household," in J. F. Willard and W. A. Morris, eds., *The English Government at Work, 1327-1336,* Cambridge, Mass., 1940, I, 250-299; M. C. Prestwich, "Exchequer and Wardrobe in the Later Years of Edward I," *Bulletin of the Institute for Historical Research,* XLVI, 1973, 1-10; and Bryce Lyon, *Wardrobe Book of Norwell,* pp. xi-cxxiii.

[10] *Wardrobe Book of Norwell,* pp. 461, 204, 206-211, 325-392. The money referred to is English sterling.

[11] The best account of Edward III's expedition to the Low Countries remains that of H. S. Lucas, *The Low Countries and the Hundred Years' War, 1326-1347,* Ann Arbor, 1929. See also Hans Van Werveke, in Van Werveke and J. F. Niermeyer, eds., *Algemene Geschiedenis der Nederlanden,* Antwerp, 1951, III, 36-62; H. J. Hewitt, *The Organization of War Under Edward III, 1338-62,* Manchester, 1966; Michael Prestwich, *The Three Edwards: War and State in England 1272-1377,* New York, 1980, and *Armies and Warfare in the Middle Ages,* New Haven, 1996; W. W. Ormrod, *The Reign of Edward III,* New Haven, 1991; C. Allmand, *The Hundred Years' War: England and France at War c. 1300-c. 1450,* Cambridge, 1988; Kenneth Fowler, ed., *The Hundred Years' War,* London, 1971; and Philippe Contamine, *La guerre de cent ans,* Paris, 1968.

The approximately 370 ships appearing in this wardrobe book is a figure greater than either the 147 ships said by one chronicler to make up the fleet of Sluis or the 330 ships mentioned by another chronicler. Runyan and other scholars have generally agreed that about 260 ships were involved.[12] Obviously more ships were required for transporting the force overseas than for a sea engagement and this necessitated large ships such as cogs and other types which had to be refitted to transport horses or to engage in naval conflict. The figure of 370 comes primarily from that section of the wardrobe book entitled *Incipiunt Vadia Nautarum* that, port by port, lists the names of the ships, the masters' names, the numbers of constables, sailors, pages, clerks, and carpenters, and the duration of service plus the wages. Masters and constables received 6d. daily as did clerks and carpenters (noted only on royal ships); sailors, 3d., and pages (ship's boys) 1.5d. Typical of the entries for all ships with their home ports identified is this for one of the king's ships *(naves regis), la Cog Thomas "de Turri Londonie": "Roberto Salomon magistro navis vocate la Cog Thomas pro vadiis suis, 1 constabularii, 1 clerici, 1 carpentarii quolibet ad 6d. et 116 marinariorum quolibet ad 3d. et 16 pagettorum quolibet ad 1.5d. per diem videlicet per 21 dies infra tempus supradictum, 34 lb.13s."*[13] The 370 ships were manned by 370 masters, 282 constables (smaller ships usually had no constables), 11,325 sailors, 585 pages, plus 5 clerks and 4 carpenters for the king's ships. The data on the types of ships is more sparse. Usually when a vessel is a cog it is so designated. Generally, however, the entries refer only to *naves* as, for example, in this entry: *"Henrico Prest magistro navis vocate la Trinite . . ."*[14] A total of 52 different cogs are noted. The royal cogs docked at the Tower of London numbered 7. Other ports providing the most cogs were Great Yarmouth with 6; Dartmouth, 4; Winchelsea, 4; and Bristol, 4. We are left to speculate as to the type of the other vessels although some are identified as hulks, spinaces, busses, and barges. Surely there were few galleys because Edward I was the last king to order their construction and on the northern seas they were much less seaworthy.[15]

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[12] Runyan, in *Feeding Mars,* p. 98. Lucas cites various chroniclers' estimates of figures which range from three to five hundred ships for the trip between Orwell and Antwerp. Lucas states that at the battle of Sluis the French fleet numbered over 200 ships and that the English fleet was smaller (*Low Countries,* pp. 283, 398).

[13] *Wardrobe Book of Norwell,* p. 363. For serving another 28 days with 1 constable, 1 clerk, 1 carpenter, and 108 sailors, Salomon received 40 lb. 12s. (p. 363).

[14] *Ibid.* p. 365.

[15] Runyan states that in 1294 Edward I ordered 20 galleys to be constructed but that building accounts indicate that only 8 were completed. He concludes that "from the late thirteenth century onward, a galley was a less preferable choice of ship to build" (*Feeding Mars,* p. 84). Edward III did have some galleys in his fleet because he had contracted with Nicholas Blank de Flisk from Marseilles to serve with a galley (*Calendar of Patent Rolls, 1338-1340,* p. 190). Various entries in Norwell's wardrobe book indicate that Nicholas must have been put in charge of some other galleys because he, his sailors, and soldiers were well remunerated. The pertinent entries are the following: *"Eodem die*

The latest research of Runyan indicates that ports "north of the Thames to the Humber and the southwestern coastal towns" were the principal suppliers of ships for trade and war between 1337 and 1360, a not surprising conclusion given the destination of English overseas campaigns in this period.[16] The wardrobe book mostly confirms this conclusion but also provides the specific information discussed above. The accompanying table tabulates this information.[17] The disparity in remuneration is striking. For example, Great Yarmouth and the other five Norfolk ports supplied the most ships (69) and the most personnel (2,738), but the total remuneration was only 199 lb. 10s. 3d. compared with the six ports of Dorset that supplied only 52 ships and personnel totalling 1,552 yet with a remuneration of 789 lb. 1s. 9d. This disparity is explained by the length of service. The personnel from Great Yarmouth and the other Norfolk ports served for a relatively short period, from 17 July to 1 August 1338. Those from the Dorset ports served for 27 days and some for longer. Those from Kingston upon Hull (Yorkshire) served 98 days. And the 264 personnel from the ports of Montacute and Thorne (Somerset) served on five ships for 93 days, being paid wages of 284 lb. 13s. 7.5d.[18]

English Ports Supplying Edward III's Ships and Their Crews
(compiled from *Wardrobe Book of William de Norwell, 12 July 1338 to 27 May 1340)*

Counties	Ships	Masters	Constables	Sailors	Pages	Clerks	Carpenters	Wages
Norfolk Great Yarmouth Blakeney Cromer Holme Warham Wiggenhall	61 8	61 8	52 4	2,329 173	100 11			164 lb. 15s. 34 lb. 15s. 3d.
Dorset Gosford Hooke Lynn Melcombe Poole Weymouth	52	52	43	1,404	53			789 lb. 1s. 9d.
Devon Dartmouth Exmouth Plymouth Seaton Sidmouth Tynmouth	30	30	30	889	44			415 lb. 4s. 9d.

Yorkshire Kingston upon Hull Ravenscar Swinhey Swynhumber	27	27	19	801	23			705 lb. 3s. 7.5d.
Suffolk Dunwich Ipswich Orford Orwell	26	26	24	891	38			415 lb. 4s. 9d.
Sussex Hastings Rye Shoreham Winchelsea	22	22	21	839	64			248 lb. 3s. 5d.
Kent Faversham Greenwich Hythe Maidstone Romney Sandwich Strood	22	22	11	507	44			152 lb. 17s. 8d.

Hampshire Lymington Southampton	14	14	12	386	26			115 lb. 15s. 3d.
Middlesex Tower of London (king's ships)	14	14	13	1,223	94	5	4	477 lb. 3s. 4.5d.
Cornwall Falmouth Fowey Looe Polruan	11	11	11	324	18			98 lb. 19s. 3d.
Lincolnshire Boston Grimsby Saltfleet Surfleet Wainfleet	11	11	6	234	10			48 lb. 4d.
Middlesex Port of London	10	10	8	222	14			60 lb. 16s.
Gloucestershire Bristol	9	9	7	270	15			83 lb. 6s. 1.5d.

Essex Brightlingsea Colchester Hadleigh Harwich Island of Mersea	7	7	4	103	9			38 lb. 16s. 7.5d.
Somerset Montacute Thorne	5	5	4	222	33			284 lb. 13s. 7.5d.
Northumberland Newcastle upon Tyne Tyne	4	4	1	223				216 lb. 17s. 9d.
Ireland Cork Dublin	2	2	2	70	4			21 lb. 5s. 3d.
Cheshire Chester	1	1	1	29	2			8 lb. 18s. 6d.
Isle of Wight Yarmouth	1	1	1	28	2			8 lb. 13s. 3d.
Wales West Glamorgan Swansea	1	1	1	26	2			8 lb. 2s. 9d.

On 20 February 1340 when Edward III and some of his councillors and household returned from Sluis to Orwell to negotiate at Westminster for more money from parliament, ships and their personnel still stationed in Brabant and Flanders were arrested to provide the transportation. Seventeen named masters and their ships with their complements of sailors (numbers not given) were arrested. For their service the masters and their crews received a total of 1,368 lb. 12s. 1.5d. The duration of this service is not stated but if it was only for the voyage from Sluis to Orwell it was limited to a few days. It would seem, therefore, that when ships, masters, and sailors overseas were arrested for service their remuneration was considerably higher. Of the seventeen named masters, five came from Hull, two from Lynn, two from London, and two from Ravenscar (Yorkshire). The ports of the other six masters are not given.[19]

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per manus Nicholas Blank de Flisk magistri galearum pro vadiis suis et hominum suorum existentium in dictis galeis, 366 lb." (p. 3); *"Domino Nicholao de Flysk militi percipienti per diem 12s. tam pro vadiis et expensis suis propriis quam hominum suorum ad arma in comitiva sua existentium... per 567 dies, 340 lb. 4s."* (p. 343). In another entry Nicholas is noted to have served for 119 days with his men in accordance with the contract *"in litera regis patente"* (pp. 355-356). In the section of the wardrobe book where Norwell accounted for the royal jewels and gold and silver plate in the wardrobe, it is noted that a silver cup decorated with gold and a water pitcher also decorated with gold with a value of 7 lb. 6s. 3d. had been given to Nicholas (p. 400). On another occasion Nicholas is referred to as *"patrono galearum regis"* and received 416 lb. for his service and that of his sailors. He received part of this money from the banking society of the Bardi in Antwerp (p. 428). Occasionally other types of vessels are noted. Alexander Springet, master of *la Margarete,* described as a royal spinace anchored at the Tower of London, had a crew of 1 constable, 26 sailors, and 3 pages (p. 364). John de Stalham, master of *la Spinace* from Great Yarmouth, served with a crew of 1 constable, 21 sailors, and 1 page (p. 381). Robert, a royal chamberlain, was sent *"per regem super mare cum una bargia, una spinacia, et una magna nave"* with 19 men-at-arms and a crew of 138 sailors (p. 385). John Paunz is referred to as a master of the king's barge *la Edmond* from Hythe (p. 220). There are also references to French galleys (p. 221).

16 *Feeding Mars,* pp. 86-87.

17 The data in this table are primarily from the section *Incipiunt Vadia Nautarum* (pp. 363-386).

18 *Ibid.*, pp. 375, 383-384.

19 *Ibid.*, pp. 434-435. The first entry indicates why these ships were arrested: *"Johanni Swerd magistro de la Godier de Hulla et Rogero Swerd magistro de la Marie de Hulla arestatis per ministros regis de precepto suo in partibus Brabancie anno regni sui xiii ad reducendum eum cum familia sua de Brabancia en Angliam de prestito super vadiis suis et marinariorum dictorum navium per manus domini Thome de Hatfeld, clerici camere regis, solventis eis denarios."* In January and February 1340 numerous magnates, bannerets, knights, and men-at-arms transported a large number of their horses back to England from Sluis. The entries do not indicate that ships were arrested for this service but each individual had to pay for the passage of his horses and then was recompensed by the wardrobe. The number of ships and sailors involved is not noted but the wardrobe paid a total of 1,540 lb. 6s. 8d. The cost of transportation was a half marc for each horse. The following is a typical entry: *"Domino Henrico de Burghassh episcopo Lincolniensi pro*

Sometimes payments were made to masters and their crews with no mention of the names of the masters, their ships, or their home ports. For example, John de Montgomery, a banneret and household knight, and John Wawayn, a trusted royal clerk, were sent overseas for certain negotiations. They and their personnel used 2 ships with their masters, 2 constables, and 152 sailors. The negotiations and the voyage over and back between 16 December 1336 and 5 January 1337 totalled 21 days. For this naval service the wages were 42 lb. On another occasion Robert, a royal chamberlain, was sent overseas with 19 men-at-arms on 1 barge, 1 pinace, and 1 large ship (*magna nave*). Robert's men-at-arms received 6d. daily and 138 sailors received 3d. daily for a period of 31 days between 12 March and 11 April 1340 for a total of 68 lb. 19s. 6d.[20]

Although at least ninety percent of the data on masters, ships, sailors, ports, and wages comes from the section *Incipiunt Vadia Nautarum,* dispersed throughout the wardrobe book are entries relating to all sorts of transactions pertaining to ships and their personnel. Among the diverse payments of money received by the wardrobe from the exchequer to compensate for wardrobe expenditures were 66 lb. 13s. 4d. paid to John But, admiral of the fleet at Harwich, for his wages and those of 11 masters of ships.[21] One of numerous payments to Nicholas Blank de Flisk from Marseilles, referred to as a master of galleys, was 366 lb. for the wages of himself and his sailors. Nicholas had previously contracted to serve Edward III with his galley but obviously he had later been put in charge of a few other galleys.[22] Listed under the rubric *Incipiunt Necessaria* are payments to pilots. The pilot Michael Long and 290 pilots used to guide the 291 ships on the crossing from Orwell to Antwerp on 16 July 1338, received 97 lb. from the wardrobe clerk Walter de Wetwang. Each pilot received a half marc (6s. 8d.) for his service. This sum multiplied by 291 equals the 97 lb. paid for the pilots. Nicholas Pike, a prominent merchant from London, who rendered various services to Edward III and is referred to as a master of *la Trinite,* received 35 lb. for providing pilots for the return trip of 13 royal ships and another from London.[23] Under the rubric *Titulus de Prestitis Factis Diversis Infra Tempus Huius Compoti* (advance

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passagio 6 equorum suorum pro corpore suo proprio, 25 equorum pro 5 banerettis suis videlicet pro quolibet 5 equi et 96 equorum pro 24 militibus suis videlicet pro quolibet 4 equis et 225 equis pro 75 scutiferis suis videlicet pro quolibet 3 equi, pro quolibet equo dim. mr., 117 lb. 6s. 8d" (pp. 386-392). In another section on imprests 17 masters were remunerated for their arrested ships (pp. 434-436).

20 *Ibid.*, p. 385.

21 *Ibid.*, p. 2.

22 *Ibid.*, p. 3. For other payments to Nicholas see note 15.

23 *"Michaeli le Long et 290 sociis suis xvii die Julii anno xxi° in alto mari de Orewell versus Andewerpiam pro lodmanagio 291 navium passantium regem et homines de exercitu suo, equos eorum et victualia in prima transfrecacione sua versus partes Brabancie ad impugnandum dominum Philippum de Valoys pro rege Francie se gerentem pro qualibet navi dim. mr. per manus Walteri de Wetewang, 97 lb."* (*ibid.*, pp. 233-234).

payments for services) the royal clerk John de Watenhull received 750 lb. for paying the wages of the king's sailors assembled at Walton near Orwell on 14 July 1338.[24]

The transactions involved in outfitting, repairing, and provisioning ships are scrupulously recorded for the royal ships. Henry de Greystoke, clerk of the royal chamber, was also the clerk responsible for the king's ships *la Touz Seintz* and *le Alhalghcog*. Henry received 100s. from the customs on wool at Southampton to help pay 62 lb. 6d. authorized by Edward III to provision *la Touz Seintz*.[25] For wages of men repairing *le Alhalghcog*, Richard de la Pole, the merchant-banker from Hull and king's butler, sold 4 casks of Gascon wine for 20 marcs and paid this sum to Henry; Stephen le Blount, custodian of the king's victuals at Portsmouth, sold 6 casks of flour for 9 lb. 9s., 4 casks of cider for 64s., 12 slabs of bacon for 48s., and 2 casks of Gascon wine for 4 lb., and paid Henry 19 lb. 12s.; and William de Dunstaple, custodian of the king's victuals at Great Yarmouth, sold a variety of victuals and paid the proceeds of 14 lb. 4s. to Henry. During these repairs Henry and the crew also had to be paid. For the service of 421 days Henry, 1 master, 1 constable, and 1 carpenter received 6d. daily; 58 sailors, 3d.; and 6 pages, 1.5d. Their total compensation came to 284 lb. 5s. 6d. but with the note that wages for 91 days had been deducted because these had been previously paid from another source and that wages for 1 sailor for 28 days were also deducted.[26] These operations to maintain 2 of the king's ships serve to indicate the logistics involved to maintain not only the small royal fleet but all the other ships while in the king's service.

In his discussion of the types of vessels prominent during the fourteenth century Runyan emphasized that the cog emerged "as the standard vessel for transport and war" because of the larger size and because its broad deck and high freeboards mitigated construction of protective battlements for naval engagements. The largest cogs constructed in the fourteenth century had displacements of up to 300 tons.[27] The wardrobe book does not indicate tonnage of ships but is specific on the complements of crews. Besides the masters and constables serving on the king's ships, almost all of which are designated as cogs, were the

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[24] *Ibid.*, p. 437.

[25] *Ibid.*, p. 6. For other transactions involving Henry and these 2 royal ships see pp. 58-59, 64-65, 75, 385, 412-413.

[26] *Ibid.*, pp. 58-59, 385. Some of these supplies for Edward III's ships were procured from Flanders and Brabant. For example, John Garlof, a burgher of Sluis, received 100s. for supplying 10,000 quarrels *"ad municionem navium de Flandria missarum in obsequio regis super mare apud Lesclus in Flandria"* (p. 219). Garlof also furnished some ships. Two royal clerks paid 1,500 lb. at Sluis *"Johanni Garlof burgensi de Sclusis admirallo 7 navium de Flandria misso super mare in obsequio regis de prestito super vadiis marinariorum dictarum navium"* (p. 428).

[27] *Feeding Mars,* pp. 83-84.

largest complements of sailors numbering 116, 108, 103, and 87.[28] From great Yarmouth the largest complements on various ships were 100, 81, 78, 72, 66, and 62. From Lynn there was a ship with a crew of 58, and from Poole one with 49, and from Rye one with 76 and another with 72. Generally the complements from all the ports averaged in the thirties and forties.[29] Rarely did the complements dip below 15 but from Kingston upon Hull one ship had only a master and a crew of 7, and from Swynhumber one ship had a master and crew of 5 and another a master and a crew of 4.[30] Obviously these ships were small and used only to transport supplies between ports along the coast.

To assemble the fleet of 291 ships to transport his force to Antwerp and to obtain the other odd 80 ships which served him primarily in the period from late 1337 until 25 September 1340 when he concluded a truce with Philip VI of France that ended his Low Country campaign, Edward III had to spread his net wide. From Ireland, Wales, all around the English coast and north up to Newcastle upon Tyne his various officials labored to procure the necessary ships, personnel, horses, war materiel, and supplies. It was an amazing logistical effort that involved 64 ports plus others unnamed in the wardrobe book. Later in the Hundred Years' War Edward's French campaigns involved more ships and crew and larger fighting forces but the transportation only involved a short distance across the English Channel. The voyage of Edward III and his fleet across the North Sea to Antwerp involved at least 135 miles.

Other pertinent exchequer and chancery records could be used to flesh out the above data but none of these records combine and organize such data as efficiently as this wardrobe book does. The preciseness and accuracy with which the data is recorded says much about the sophistication of the organs of English royal administration by the reign of Edward III. As the principal war treasury the wardrobe and its staff, almost a civil service because of its duration, comprised the nerve center of Edward III's military and naval efforts. On the Continent there was as yet no comparable administrative apparatus and definitely no records such as the wardrobe books which afford a daily, monthly, and yearly accounting of what a king was spending of his and of his subjects' money.

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28 *Wardrobe Book of Norwell,* pp. 363-364.

29 *Ibid.*, pp. 379-382, 367, 373, 386.

30 *Ibid.*, pp. 375, 377.