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Henry V and the crossing to France: reconstructing naval operations for the Agincourt campaign, 1415

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ABSTRACT

The Battle of Agincourt, 1415, has attracted much attention from scholars. Yet much of the academic focus in this phase of the Hundred Years War centres on the English king, the army, the battle and its aftermath. Much less research has been carried out on the maritime logistics that underpinned Henry V's invasion of France. This article seeks to address this lacuna by focusing on three key areas of the naval operations in 1415. Firstly, it will assess the numbers of foreign ships that participated in the crossing. Secondly, it will reconstruct the process of gathering English ships. Finally, it will analyse the naval patrols put to sea over 1414 and 1415 which were designed to protect the gathering transport armada.

On 11 August 1415 a large fleet slipped out of the Solent and headed to the Chef de Caux.[1] The fleet was transporting an army of at least 11,248 fighting men, including Henry V of England aboard his ship the *Trinite Roiale*. In his play *Henry V* Shakespeare immortalised the men who fought and won at Agincourt as 'the few'.[2] Here Shakespeare alludes to the state of Henry's army, diminished by siege sickness and exhausted by a long march. It was a remarkable victory and one that had an important effect on Henry's kingship. The Lancastrians were a new dynasty, one that had usurped the throne. Agincourt showed God favoured that usurpation. Success on the battlefield also generated political and financial support for Henry to undertake his subsequent conquest of Normandy.[3]

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[1] The following abbreviations are used in this paper: BL: London, British Library; *CClR* and date: *Calendar of the Close Rolls Preserved in the Public Record Office: Edward III*. 14 vols. (London: H.M.S.O, 1892-1913), and *Calendar of the Close Rolls Preserved in the Public Record Office: Henry V*. 2 vols. (London: H.M.S.O., 1929-32); *CPR* and date: *Calendar of the Patent Rolls Preserved in the Public Record Office: Henry IV*. 4 vols. (London: H.M.S.O., 1903-9) and *Calendar of the Patent Rolls Preserved in the Public Record Office: Henry V*. 2 vols. (London: H.M.S.O., 1910-11); *PROME*: Christopher Given-Wilson, ed., *The Parliament Rolls of Medieval England, 1275–1504*. 17 vols. (Woodbridge: Boydell, 2005); TNA: Kew, The National Archives.
Frank Taylor and John S. Roskell, eds. and trans., *Gesta Henrici quinti: The Deeds of Henry the Fifth* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1975), 21.

[2] William Shakespeare, *Henry V*, ed. Frederick Houk Law (New York: American Book Company, 1914), 84.

[3] Anne Curry, 'After Agincourt, What Next? Henry V and the Campaign of 1416', *The Fifteenth Century VII: Conflicts, Consequences, and the Crown in the Late Middle Ages*, ed. Linda Clark (Woodbridge: Boydell, 2007), 23–52, who argues that the dual victories of Agincourt in 1415 and Harfleur in 1416 enabled Henry to undertake the conquest of Normandy.

Aided in no small part by Shakespeare, the Agincourt campaign has an established place in the annals of English history.[4] Much like Shakespeare's play, however, the Agincourt narrative is one dominated by analyses of the commanders, the army, the campaign and the battle.[5] In most biographies of Henry V and his leading nobles, Agincourt forms a centre point around which to fit the larger narrative. Much ink has been spilt on understanding what Henry's strategic and tactical plans were before, during and after the campaign.[6] There is also a growing literature on the composition of the English army, helped by the survival of nominal muster rolls compiled before the army sailed and pay accounts submitted after the campaign.[7] Focus on the army and the battle has meant historians have largely ignored the recruitment and deployment of naval forces over 1415. In part this is the result of a perceived lack of source material. The usual hunting ground for naval historians of the Hundred Years War are the records generated by the crown's wartime requisitioning (and payment) of merchant vessels for naval duties and for the transportation of armies and supplies. These records reveal the size and composition of the fleets. Unfortunately, the fleet that transported Henry V's army to France in 1415 has no associated payroll.

Lack of naval source material has meant most historians have relied on chronicles to estimate the size of the transport fleet and largely ignored the flotillas raised to defend the coast at this sensitive time.[8] Some scholars have used the more reliable Exchequer records to examine the transport fleet, but they pass swiftly over the naval operations before devoting more space to the structure of the army and the campaign.[9] This is unfortunate because assembling a fleet large enough to transport an army and non-combatants numbering perhaps 14,000 men was a major undertaking. Arguably it was the most difficult task faced by any medieval English government. English records show that there were some 200 ports in the kingdom, and large fleets usually consisted of vessels requisitioned from some 80 of these. In terms of manpower, the naval dimension of any campaign was significant. In 1346 it took 16,000 mariners to transport Edward III's army of 14,000 men to France.[10] It is likely that the numbers of mariners serving in 1415 equalled the army they helped to transport. We need to give fuller treatment to the fleets that enabled Henry to transport his army and defend the coast. This is no easy task. As we lack a definitive payroll for the fleets assembled over 1415, we have to mine other sources. These sources are not as comprehensive as those which illuminate the army, but, used carefully, they allow us to reach some conclusions as to the size of the fleets.

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[4] For how Shakespeare's *Henry V* played an important role in placing the Battle of Agincourt within English consciousness, see Anne Curry, *Great Battles: Agincourt* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), Chapter 4.

[5] The best guides to the army and the campaign are A. Curry, *Agincourt: a New History* (Stroud: Tempus, 2005); Juliet Barker, *Agincourt: the King, the Campaign and the Battle* (London: Little, Brown, 2005).

[6] Curry, *Great Battles:* Chapters 1 and 7 provide an analysis of views of the campaign and battle.

[7] Adrian R. Bell, Anne Curry, Andy King and David Simpkin, *The Soldier in Later Medieval England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013).

[8] See, for example, Nicholas H. Nicolas, *History of the Royal Navy: From the Earliest Times to the Wars of the French Revolution*, vol. 2 (London: R. Bentley, 1847), 409; Robert B. Mowat, *Henry V* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1920), 127; James Hamilton Wylie, *The Reign of Henry the Fifth.* 2 vols. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1914–19), 2: 1; Christopher T. Alllmand, *Henry V* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992), 78; Ian Mortimer, *1415: Henry V's Year of Glory* (London: Bodley Head, 2009), 323–5.

[9] Jonathon Sumption, *Cursed Kings: the Hundred Years War*, vol. 4 (London: Faber & Faber, 2015), 414; Barker, *Agincourt*, 96–8; Curry, *Agincourt*, 70.

[10] Craig Lambert, *Shipping the Medieval Military: English Maritime Logistics in the Fourteenth Century* (Woodbridge: Boydell, 2011), 139.

Raising a transport fleet: the maritime resources of England

Much has been made of Henry's interest in naval matters and his appreciation of what sea power could achieve.[11] In 1415, however, Henry's officials were faced with a difficult task. Since Richard II of England and Charles VI of France agreed a truce in 1389, the Hundred Years War had lain dormant. True, Anglo-French fighting still occurred, as England continued to hold Gascony and Calais, but, with the exception of the Scottish expedition of 1400 and the campaign to France in 1412, the naval dimension of these expeditions was relatively small-scale. Conflict at sea resembled a war of proxy in which English mariners were encouraged to attack the vessels of their French counterparts.[12] Nonetheless, sporadic warfare within the British Isles ensured English officials maintained an expertise in maritime logistics. In 1394–5 Richard II assembled over 200 transport ships to freight his army to Ireland, and four years later he shipped another large force to the same country.[13] Several men who organised Richard II's fleets in the 1390s continued to be retained by Henry IV and Henry V.[14] Others who would come to play a central part in the logistical operations of 1415 had cut their teeth in Henry IV's military expeditions and worked in areas of government that dealt with shipping or supplies. Richard Cliderowe (Clitherow), the man tasked with hiring foreign ships for the crossing in 1415, had organised the maritime logistics for Henry IV's 1400 Scottish campaign and had held the posts of victualler of Calais and customs collector at Newcastle and Ipswich, and as the owner of a ship (the *Cog John*) was familiar with the business of shipping.[15] John Everdon, the man responsible for requisitioning English ships for the crossing, was an auditor of Exchequer accounts, former treasurer to Queen Joan, and would serve in the 1415 campaign.[16]

At the core of any fleet were the king's ships, but when a large army needed transporting these were never sufficient in number to meet the needs of the crown.[17] In order to get several thousand men to France, the crown relied on its prerogative to requisition merchantmen. For most of the Hundred Years War the sea coast of England was divided into two admiralties: the admiral of the north was in charge of all the ports located from the north bank of the Thames to Berwick; while the admiral of the south was responsible for the ports situated from the south bank of the Thames to Skinburness in Cumbria – although for practical purposes the southern admiral drew most ships and mariners from the ports located from Kent to Somerset. In 1415, Thomas Beaufort, earl of Dorset, was sole admiral, but the orders issued over 1415 make it clear the coast was divided into manageable sections for the purposes of requisition. The location of the intended campaign also had an impact on which ports were exploited for ships and where the fleet assembled. Those armies sailing to Gascony tended to be launched from

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[11] See, for example, Allmand, *Henry V*, 220–32, and Colin Richmond, 'English Naval Power in the Fifteenth Century', *History* 52 (1967): 1–15.

[12] Christopher Ford, 'Piracy or Policy: the Crisis in the Channel, 1400–1403', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 5th series, 29 (1979): 63–78.

[13] TNA, E 101/41/26–33; E 101/42/4–9.

[14] These were Richard Makele, Robert Kays and John Drax; see *CPR, 1399–1401*, 270, 312, 313, 348, 397, 413, 516; *CPR, 1413–16*, 77, 220, 264.

[15] TNA, E 101/42/30; E 101/42/34; E 122/106/30; E 122/51/19; *List of Foreign Accounts Enrolled on the Great Rolls of the Exchequer*. PRO Lists and Indexes 11 (London: H.M.S.O., 1900), 20, 45; *CPR, 1413–16*, 293.

[16] TNA, E 101/69/8/513; *CPR, 1401–5*, 489.

[17] At the time of his death in 1422, Henry had 36 ships, but in 1415 he possessed approximately 10; see Susan Rose, *England's Medieval Navy, 1066–1509: Ships, Men and Warfare* (Barnsley: Seaforth, 2013), 50–1.

Devonshire or Hampshire ports, those going to Brittany or Normandy usually sailed from Portsmouth or Southampton, and those going to Calais or Flanders sailed from East Anglian ports or, more usually, Sandwich.[18] For naval forces impressment remained the most important method used for raising fleets and men. In March 1415, for example, the admiral was told to arrest all ships over 20 tons and have them at Southampton by 8 May.[19]

On visiting a port an official would take a written record of the name of the ship, the man who commanded it and the vessel's home port. It was expected that the arrested ships would appear at the embarkation port some months later. Throughout the Hundred Years War, crews were issued an advance on their wages. Advances of pay to mariners for service not yet rendered continued to be the norm right to the end of the French war. For example, on 16 July 1451 Robert Gotham, master of the *Margrete Talbot* of Bristol of 260 tons, received an advance of £32 for taking part of Lord Rivers' force to Gascony.[20] This system enabled the English crown to requisition huge fleets. In 1338 some 400 ships transported Edward III's army to Flanders, while four years later over 450 vessels shipped his army to Brittany.[21] In 1346 the English put to sea a fleet of 750 ships and only 61 of these were not requisitioned from the pool of English merchantmen.[22] In 1417 of the 256 ships that we know transported Henry V's army to the River Touques, 124 were requisitioned from English ports.[23]

From the last quarter of the fourteenth century to the end of the conflict in 1453, three fundamental changes occurred in fleet requisition. Firstly, after 1417 fleets became smaller than those raised for Edward III's and Richard II's expeditions. Secondly, hired foreign ships were deployed in larger numbers. Thirdly, the crown exploited fewer ports for ships, and there was a greater emphasis on smaller ports. Let us explore the first issue. Over the first phase of the war (broadly 1338–60), Edward III had regularly raised transport armadas numbering over 300 ships. The largest transport fleet assembled after 1417 was in 1443 when 94 ships transported the duke of Somerset to Cherbourg.[24] The reason

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[18] See Lambert, *Shipping*, Chapter 1; Anne Curry, 'Southern England: the Campaigns to France, 1415–1450', in *Building on the Past: Papers Presented to Tom Beaumont James*, eds. Amanda Richardson, Mary South and Mark Allen (forthcoming, Oxford, 2017). I am grateful to Professor Anne Curry for allowing me to read this paper prior to publication.

[19] *CClR, 1413–19*, 162.

[20] TNA, E 101/54/15/16 is the indenture; E 101/54/14 is the payroll ('Robert Gotham master of the ship called the *Margrete Talbot* of Bristol of 260 tons, whereof John earl of Shrewsbury is owner, hath received of Richard Graynell for 66 mariners and one page £32 in part payment for wages for attending upon the passage of Richard, Lord Ryvers, to parts of Giuyen'). This fleet consisted of large ships, with a total of 11,443 tons and manned by over 3300 mariners. The largest vessel was the 400-ton *Trinity* of Dartmouth. The fleet never sailed to Gascony.

[21] 1338: Mary Lyon, Bryce Lyon and Henry S. Lucas, eds., *The Wardrobe Book of William de Norwell* (Brussels: Palais des Académies, 1983), 364–84; TNA, E 101/20/7; E 101/20/39; E 101/21/7; E 101/21/10; E 101/21/12; 1342: E 36/204, 22–40; E 101/20/39; E 101/24/9 (b); C 47/2/35; *CClR, 1343–46*, 128–32.

[22] BL, MS Harley 246, f. 15v; fol. 65r; MS Harley 3968, f. 132r. Twenty-five ships were royal vessels and 36 were foreign.

[23] Thomas D. Hardy, ed., *Rotuli Normanniae in turri Londinensi asservati, Johanne et Henrico quinto Angliae regibus*, vol. 1, *1200–1205, 1417* (London: Record Commission, 1835), 321–9; TNA, E 101/48/8; E 101/48/15, m. 1; E 101/48/18; E 101/48/22; E 101/48/23; E 101/48/24; E 101/48/25; E 101/48/26; E 101/48/28; E 101/49/1; E 101/49/3; E 101/49/7, m. 1; E 101/49/16. The Cinque Ports were told to provide their quota of 57 ships (*CClR, 1413–19*, 391), but as these were manned by unpaid crews we can never know if they did so. There were possibly more ships in 1417 as we only have records of those shipmasters given licences to leave, although it is possible that Henry used a smaller fleet and made several crossings.

[24] TNA, E 403/750, mm. 12–16; E 101/53/39, mm. 4, 4d; E 101/54/4. Rose, *England's Medieval Navy*, 60, argues this fleet sailed to Gascony. In fact, Somerset sailed to Normandy; see Michael K. Jones, 'John Beaufort, Duke of Somerset, and the French Expedition of 1443', in *Patronage, the Crown and the Provinces in Later Medieval England*, ed. Ralph A. Griffiths (Gloucester: A. Sutton, 1981), 79–102. One of the largest expeditionary armies assembled under Henry VI was that of 1430–2, but this force was not shipped to France as one unit; see Anne Curry, 'The Coronation Expedition

for this was simple. After 1417 English expeditionary armies tended to be smaller than the forces sent to France by Edward III and Richard II. Once Henry had conquered Normandy in 1419, large-scale naval operations ceased. Smaller armies could be shipped in relays from the south of England to Calais, Harfleur or Cherbourg, although fleets heading to Gascony still needed to deliver the combatants in one go. Using smaller fleets had an advantage, because it was relatively easy for the crown to find 20 to 30 ships over 100 tons for each fleet. The average size of ships arrested for naval service in the fourteenth century was 79 tons and for the period 1400–1453 it was 78 tons. Indeed, after 1420 the average size of transport ships rarely fell below 50 tons, and most averaged between 70 and 90 tons.[25] In 1443 the average size of the English ships that took the duke of Somerset to France was 75 tons and 21 (23% of the entire fleet) of these were 100 tons and over, including the 400-ton *Marie* from Dartmouth.[26] This was the balance needed for logistical operations; a quarter of the fleet consisted of ships greater than 100 tons, probably employed for freighting horses, while the rest were used to ship men.[27] Smaller ships were easier to manoeuvre into port, dock and unload, and were cheaper to man than larger ships. The vessels assembled in 1451 to ship the forces under the command of Lord Rivers to Gascony averaged 140 tons, the largest average tonnage of any fleet raised in the Hundred Years War.[28] It is true that smaller craft were used in some post-1415 fleets but Henry V's use of smaller ships from 1417 to 1420 made strategic sense. In his conquest of Normandy, Henry needed large numbers of small and fast transport and supply ships that could make the crossing to France in less time and sail up French rivers to bring supplies to English garrisons.

The second important change in requisition practices is more complex, as the hiring of foreign ships by Henry V is seen as an indicator that the English merchant fleet was much depleted.[29] Yet hiring foreign hulls on a large scale was a practice established in the 1370s.[30] It has been argued that evidence drawn from the Bordeaux custom records shows that there was a lack of large ships, which restricted Lancastrian naval planning.[31] As is shown here there was a respectable number of ships over 70 tons deployed in naval operations. The Bordeaux wine accounts may not provide a representative picture. We can test this by examining the overlap (the number of ships sailing in both capacities) between ships undertaking naval service and those sailing to Bordeaux for wine. Using a methodology that links a ship's name with its master's name and home port (the three-identifier method), we can estimate how many separate ships sailed in both

and Henry VI's Court in France, 1430–1432', in *The Lancastrian Court: Proceedings of the 2001 Harlaxton Symposium*, ed. Jenny Stratford (Donington: Shaun Tyas, 2003), 29–52.

[25] In 1423, the duke of Exeter's fleet of some 80 ships averaged 46 tons; in 1424, Lord Willoughby's fleet of 57 ships averaged 47 tons; in 1436, a series of fleets that transported the earl of Warwick, Henry Norbury and the duke of York averaged 76 tons per vessel; in 1440, a fleet of 54 ships averaging 75 tons freighted the earl of Somerset to France; in 1442, 50 ships averaging 98 tons shipped forces under the command of the duke of York and Lord Talbot to France. In 1442 and 1443, a series of expeditionary armies were shipped to France in 130 ships averaging 73 tons. TNA, E 101/51/7; E 101/53/10; E 101/53/24; E 101/53/25; E 101/53/39; E 403/735, mm. 19–23; E 403/746, mm. 16–19; E 403/750, mm. 12–16.

[26] E 101/54/4.

[27] Larger ships might be used as convoy protection ships, but the French naval threat was minimal in the 1440s.

[28] The fleet never sailed to its destination: see E 101/54/14. The ships of the fleet that fought at Harfleur in 1416 averaged 100 tons, although we do not have a full payroll for this armada: E 101/48/10.

[29] Nicholas A.M. Rodger, *The Safeguard of the Sea: a Naval History of Britain, 660–1649* (London: Norton, 1997), 143; Allmand, *Henry V*, 78.

[30] Andrew Ayton and Craig Lambert, 'Navies and Maritime Warfare: Strategy, Organisation and Manpower', in *The Hundred Years War: Problems in Focus Revisited*, ed. Anne Curry (London: Palgrave, forthcoming).

[31] Ian Friel, *Henry V's Navy: the Sea Road to Agincourt and Conquest, 1413–1422* (Stroud: The History Press, 2015), 29.

naval and commercial voyages to Bordeaux.[32] If there was a dearth of large ships we should find a significant overlap between the navy payrolls and Bordeaux custom accounts.

Applying this method shows that, from 1401 to 1438, 438 separate English ships sailed from Bordeaux with wine. Over that same period 422 separate ships were engaged in naval activity.[33] Remarkably only eight ships (0.9%) undertook both types of service.[34] It is even more striking that only four (0.9%) of the ships over 70 tons that appear in the naval records can be matched in the group of 438 vessels in the Bordeaux customs. Even if we rely on simply matching ship names in both sources, we find that from 1401 to 1438 only 86 ships (10%) undertook both types of service. Applying the three-identifier methodology to a later phase of the French war reveals similar patterns. Over 1439–51 of the 311 separate English ships undertaking naval operations and voyages to Bordeaux only 10 (3.2%) undertook both types of service.[35] From 1439 to 1451 only two (18%) of the 11 London ships recorded at 70 tons and over appear in the Bordeaux records, meaning that over four-fifths of London's vessels greater than 70 tons can only be found undertaking naval service.[36] Using ship names as the identifier, we also see few ships sailing in both capacities. In Southampton from 1418 to 1451 eight ships of 80 tons and over served in naval campaigns, and only the *Juliane* of 140 tons can be found in the Bordeaux custom accounts.[37] In other words, just over a tenth (12.5%) of Southampton's large ships served in both naval operations and the wine trade. One of the reasons for this lack of crossover service is that ships from over 50 ports which provided vessels for naval operations never participated in the Bordeaux wine trade. Hartlepool and Whitby, for example, never sent ships to Bordeaux in this period. Indeed, the proximity of Bordeaux to Dorset, Devon and Cornish ports ensured the wine trade was dominated by south-west shipping.[38]

The third change in requisition procedures occurred because of two issues relating to the political and financial developments of the 1370s and 1380s.[39] Firstly, over the 1370s, English shipowners forged a closer political relationship with the crown.[40] The key issue behind shipowners' increasing importance was that from 1369 to 1390

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[32] This methodology is explored in more detail in Andrew Ayton and Craig Lambert, 'Shipping the Troops and Fighting at Sea: Essex Ports in England's Wars, 1320–1400', in *The Fighting Essex Soldier*, eds. Jenny Ward, Neil Wiffen and Christopher Thornton (Hertfordshire: Hertfordshire University Press, forthcoming).

[33] TNA, E 101/44/20; E 101/48/9; E 101/48/10; E 101/51/7; E 101/51/10; E 101/53/19; E 101/53/24; E 364/48, m. 4; E 403/735, mm. 21–6; Hardy, ed., *Rotuli Normannie*, 324–9.

[34] Friel, *Henry V's Navy*, 29. The Bordeaux records searched here cover the years 1401, 1403, 1409, 1410, 1411, 1412, 1413, 1423, 1429 and 1431.

[35] TNA, E 101/195/19; E101/49/25; E 101/53/19; E 101/53/24; E 101/53/25; E 101/53/27; E 101/53/39; E 101/54/10; E 101/54/14; E 403/735, mm. 21–5; E 403/746, m. 18; E 403/780, mm. 4–5.

[36] Only the *Anne* (289 tons) and *Ghost* (240 tons) can be identified in the Bordeaux custom records: E 101/195/19, ff. 64r, 73r; E 101/54/14, mm. 3; E 403/780, m. 5.

[37] Wine: 1409, TNA, E 101/184/19, f. 38v; naval service: 1418, E 101/49/25/13. The naval ships over 80 tons are the *Anthony* of 160 tons (Walter Philpot); *Margarete*, 100 tons (Robert Scot); *Edmund*, 300 tons (Thomas Licheford/ Lychfeld); *Nicholas*, 100 tons (John Dirhun); *Marie*, 200 tons (John Ban); *Juliane*, 140 tons (Richard Patyn/Portyn); *Peter*, 80 tons (John Patyn). E 101/48/8, m. 3; E 101/49/25/13; E 101/51/10/75; E 101/51/10/18; E 101/53/24, m. 2; E 101/53/25, m. 2; E 101/184/19; E 101/185/11; E 101/191/3; E 101/195/19.

[38] Wendy R. Childs, 'The Commercial Shipping of South-Western England in the Late Fifteenth Century', *Mariner's Mirror* 83 (1997): 272–92.

[39] Some of these issues are discussed in Ayton and Lambert, 'Shipping the Troops'.

[40] See, for example, Christian D. Liddy, *War, Politics and Finance in Late Medieval English Towns: Bristol, York and the Crown, 1350–1400* (Trowbridge: Royal Historical Society, 2005), 43–57, 148–89.

the French war became just as much centred on the sea as on land.[41] Using surviving muster rolls and naval records, and discounting garrison service, we see that of the 33 expeditions launched over 1369–90 in support of the French war, 22, or two-thirds (66.6%), were naval.[42] Even if we take into account major Irish and Scottish land campaigns launched over 1369–90, the greatest part of military action was focused on the sea.[43] From the period 1369–90, 23% of military expenditure was devoted to naval operations, and 83% of that was spent from 1372 to 1374.[44] Taking the wider view from 1369 to 1453, at least 31% of all expeditions were naval, even though in the period after 1417 the war was predominately fought on land as the English conquered and attempted to hold Normandy.[45] The crown's need for ships and naval manpower presented shipowners with an opportunity to exert political pressure. It is no coincidence, therefore, that over 1369–90 shipowners began a sustained campaign within Parliament that aimed to force the crown into paying expenses for the ships it arrested, ostensibly to cover the costs of repairing any damage ships suffered while under requisition.[46] As a result of political pressure, the crown became more sensitive to the needs of shipowners and tended to apply a lighter hand when it came to requisition. In 1415 and 1417 Henry V probably chose to hire a substantial number of foreign vessels in order to avoid tensions in Parliament. Using large numbers of foreign ships neatly avoided the problems suffered by Edward III and Richard II over the 1370s and 1380s, when increased demand for ships had contributed to political and social unrest.[47] The crown found it less problematic to arrest ships from small ports, and when it did target the larger, more commercially important, ports it did so for fewer ships. In 1338, a third of the ships taking the king's forces to Flanders was supplied by seven large ports such as Hull, King's Lynn, Great Yarmouth and Dartmouth, whereas in 1417 nearly a fifth of the recorded English contingent of ships came from the local ports of Cromer, Sheringham, Wells-next-the-Sea and Thornham.[48] In 1417 approximately 50 English ports were targeted, less than a quarter of the harbours in the kingdom.

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[41] Ayton and Lambert, 'Navies and Maritime Warfare'.
[42] Evidence for land expeditions and some naval campaigns is taken from the Medieval Soldier database, www. medievalsoldier.org (Accessed 12 December 2015). For land service: TNA, E 101/29/24; E 101/29/29; E 101/30/25; E 101/30/40; E 101/31/25; E 101/33/34; E 101/33/35; E 101/33/38; E 101/34/1; E 101/34/3; E 101/34/5; E 101/34/29; E 101/35/6; E 101/37/5; E 101/37/29; E 101/38/27; E 101/39/7; E 101/39/9; E 101/39/17. Naval service: BL, Add. MS 37494, ff. 17r–41v; TNA, E 122/7/12; E 101/29/29; E 101/30/21; E 101/30/37; E 101/31/11; E 101/31/15; E 101/31/17; E 101/31/28; E 101/31/31; E 101/31/32; E 101/31/35; E 101/31/37; E 101/31/39; E 101/31/40; E 101/32/1; E 101/32/13; E 101/32/16; E 101/32/17; E 101/32/20; E 101/32/24; E 101/32/26; E 101/32/29; E 101/32/30; E 101/33/9; E 101/33/13; E 101/33/14; E 101/33/15; E 101/33/16; E 101/33/17; E 101/33/23; E 101/33/24; E 101/33/25; E 101/33/32; E 101/36/24; E 101/36/22; E 101/36/25; E 101/36/26; E 101/36/28; E 101/36/29; E 101/36/34; E 101/36/39; E 101/37/10; E 101/37/28; E 101/37/29; E 101/38/2; E 101/38/10; E 101/38/28; E 101/42/13. See also David Simpkin, 'Keeping the Seas: England's Admirals, 1369–1389', in Roles of the Sea in Medieval England, ed. Richard Gorski (Woodbridge: Boydell, 2012), 79–102. Several sources document the same expedition and some naval expeditions sailed at the same time but under two admirals and it is possible that these operated as one force. A full survey of the issue rolls may show more naval and land campaigns than are revealed by the muster rolls.
[43] This includes six forces sent to Ireland and two Scottish expeditions (a standing force in 1384 and Richard II's expedition in 1385).
[44] James W. Sherborne, 'The Costs of English Warfare with France in the Later Fourteenth Century', Bulletin of the Institute of Historical Research 50 (1977): 135–50 (140).
[45] Sherborne, 'English Navy'; Bell and others, Soldier, 10, 271–2.
[46] See, for example, PROME, 5: 245, 261, 284–5, 352. They were successful in this: see the discussion below on 'ton-tight'.
[47] On this, see Ayton and Lambert, 'Shipping the Troops'.
[48] Lyon, Lyon and Lucas, eds., Wardrobe Book of William de Norwell, 364–84; Hardy, ed., Rotuli Normannie, 320–9.

The second reason was taxation. After 1360, the export of raw wool from English ports declined, with a significant fall in years before and after Agincourt.[49] At the same time there was almost a tenfold increase in the volume of cloth exports.[50] The problem for the crown was that it failed to persuade the commercial elements in Parliament to tax cloth exports as thoroughly as wool.[51] As wool exports fell, so too did the receipts of the Exchequer. Falling customs revenues meant the government was keen to ensure every possible means of raising tax from maritime trade was left uninhibited. The need to leave the shipping of larger ports free to continue commercial business was a key factor in the way fleets were assembled under the Lancastrians. Further research into the fifteenth-century merchant fleet may show a decline in tonnage as smaller ships became more economically viable to build and operate, but in 1415 the evidence suggests that Henry had access to both an ample number of merchant ships and a sufficient pool of large vessels.[52]

The fleets of 1415

The figure presented to us for the size of Henry V's transport fleet in 1415 is largely taken from chronicle accounts. The estimates of chronicles vary widely. Some suggest a fleet of between 1000 and 2000 ships, while others say the transport armada consisted of 400 ships.[53] Given that early modern transcriptions of the now lost wardrobe book of Walter Wetwang show that in 1346 Edward III needed approximately 750 ships to transport an army of 14,000 men, the most reliable estimate for the 1415 fleet is the 800 ships given by the chronicler Jehan Waurin.[54] Of course, the 400 ships referred to by the London Chronicle could have related to the size of the English contingent within the fleet, but the author does not explicitly say he is discussing the numbers of English ships.

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[49] Martin Rorke, 'English and Scottish Overseas Trade, 1300–1600', *Economic History Review*, new series, 59 (2006): 265–88 (269–70).

[50] Rorke, 'Overseas Trade', 273; Eleanor M. Carus-Wilson, 'Trends in the Export of English Woollens in the Fourteenth Century', *Economic History Review*, new series, 3 (1950): 162–79 (167).

[51] W. Mark Ormrod, 'The Domestic Response to the Hundred Years War', in *Arms, Armies and Fortifications in the Hundred Years War*, eds. Anne Curry and Michael Hughes (Woodbridge: Boydell, 1999), 83–101 (94).

[52] Richard W. Unger, 'The Tonnage of Europe's Merchant Fleets, 1300–1500', *American Neptune* 52 (1992): 247–61 (256), argues that the fifteenth century witnessed a fall in tonnage. Unger relies on Geoffrey V. Scammell, 'English Merchant Shipping at the End of the Middle Ages: Some East Coast Evidence', *Economic History Review*, new series, 13 (1961): 327–41 (331–4), whose evidence for ship size comes largely from Newcastle coal shipments, and Dorothy Burwash, *English Merchant Shipping, 1460–1540* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1947), who in turn only sampled a few fifteenth-century records.

[53] 1500 to 2000 ships: Taylor and Roskell, eds., *Gesta Henrici quinti*, 21; Thomas Walsingham, *The St Albans Chronicle: the Chronica maiora of Thomas Walsingham*, vol. 2, *1394–1422*, eds. and trans. John Taylor, Wendy R. Childs and Leslie Watkiss (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 667; G. Lefevre-Pontalis and L. Dorez, eds., *Chronique d'Antonio Morosini. Extraits relatifs á l'histoire de France.* 4 vols. (Paris: Librairie Renouard, 1898–1902), 2: 45; F.W.D. Brie, ed., *The Brut or Chronicles of England*. Early English Text Society, Original Series 131, 136. 2 vols. (London: K. Paul, Trench, Trübner and Co., 1906–8), 1: 376; Robert Fabyan, *The Great Chronicle of London*, eds. A.H. Thomas and I.D. Thornley (London: George W. Jones, 1938), 92; J. Gairdner, ed., *The Historical Collections of a Citizen of London in the Fifteenth Century*. Camden Society, new series 17 (London: Camden Society, 1876), 109. One thousand ships: Tito, Livius dei Frulovisi, translator of Livius, see C. L. Kingsford, ed., *The First English Life of King Henry V Written in 1513 by an Anonymous Author Known Commonly as the Translator of Livius* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1911), 33. Four hundred or fewer ships: 'A Short English Chronicle', in *Three Fifteenth-Century Chronicles*, ed. J. Gairdner. Camden Society, new series, 28 (London: Camden Society, 1880), 55; Lefevre-Pontalis and Dorez, eds., *Morosini*, 2: 18–20, offers here fewer ships than in the later part of his work.

[54] William Hardy and E.L.C.P. Hardy, eds., *Recueil des croniques et anchiennes istories de la Grant Bretaigne a present nomme Engleterre par Jehan de Waurin*. 5 vols. Rolls Series 39 (London: Longmans, 1864–91), 2: 184. On the 1346 fleet, see Lambert, *Shipping*, Chapter 3. On the army, see Andrew Ayton and Philip Preston, *The Battle of Crécy, 1346* (Woodbridge: Boydell, 2005), 189.

There are also inconsistencies in the way historians treat the sources, for while the chronicle estimates for the transport fleet's size have been taken at face value those they give for the size of the army have been treated with suspicion.[55] We are told that one reason for trusting the chronicles is because one of them, the author of the *Gesta Henrici quinti,* was an eyewitness.[56] It is unlikely, however, that the author of the *Gesta* ever saw the whole fleet as one unit because, much like Edward III's army in 1346, Henry's forces were shipped from Southampton and neighbouring places (*et loca vicina*).[57] It is argued here that the account of the fleet size in the *Gesta* should be dismissed as a man trying to convey the scale of the operation that lay before his eyes. Exaggeration was not new. In 1346 chroniclers were keen to emphasise the size of the fleet that shipped Edward III's army to Saint-Vaast-la-Hougue.[58] Thomas Basin stated that the fleet that took the duke of Somerset to Cherbourg in 1443 numbered 300 ships, whereas the more reliable payroll tells us it was 94.[59]

The initial moves to assemble the transport fleet were taken on 27 February 1415 when Richard Cliderowe and Reginald Curteys spent £2000 hiring ships in Zealand and Holland.[60] In March, Cliderowe was re-appointed to go back to the Low Countries, and on 26 April 1415 Cliderowe and Curteys disbursed a further £2166 13s. 4d., but this time the payments were to cover the wages of the masters and mariners who would man the ships hired in February.[61] On 18 May, Cliderowe and Curteys made a third payment to shipowners, of £449 6s. 9d. for ship hire, but not wages.[62] On 18 May, Richard Woodville, lieutenant of Dover Castle, was given £140 to pay the wages of Cinque Ports mariners who would escort the foreign ships to Southampton.[63] The final payment to foreign mariners was made in June 1416 when Cliderowe and John Everdon paid £2410 14s. 2d. for arrears owed to the crews of the foreign ships.[64] By June 1416, therefore, Henry's officials had expended £7026 14s. 3d. on foreign shipping of which £2449 6s. 9d. was for hiring ships and £4577 7s. 6d. for the wages of the mariners.[65]

These sums have been used to estimate the size of the foreign fleet, but not all expenditure has been noted and neither have the terms of the ship hire been fully understood.

[55] See, for example, Mortimer, *1415*, 324, who argues for the accuracy of the chronicle accounts; Friel, *Henry V's Navy*, 35, doubts the chronicle estimates. Susan Rose, *Southampton and the Navy in the Age of Henry V* (Hampshire: Hampshire County Council, 1998), 2, favours the 400 ships mentioned by 'A Short Chronicle of London'.
[56] Mortimer, *1415*, 323.
[57] Adam Murimuth, *Continuatio chronicarum*, Robert Avesbury, *De gestis mirabilbus regis Edwardi tertii*, ed. Edward M. Thompson. Rolls Series 93 (London: H.M.S.O., 1889), 198. Henry's army mustered in several coastal or riverine locations.
[58] Murimuth, *Continuatio chronicarum*, Avesbury, *De gestis mirabilbus regis Edwardi tertii*, ed. Thompson, 357, and E.M. Thompson, ed., *Chronicon Galfridi le Baker de Swynebroke* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1889), 79, which both say Edward's fleet numbered 1000 ships.
[59] Thomas Basin, *Histoire de Charles VII*, ed. and trans C. Samaran. 2 vols. (Paris: Société d'édition 'Les Belles lettres', 1933–44), 1: 280
[60] TNA, E 403/619, m. 13.
[61] E 403/621, m. 3. Cliderowe was re-appointed on 18 March to hire ships in the Low Countries with Simon Flete. Flete was later replaced on 4 April by Curteys. See Thomas Rymer, *Foedera, conventiones, literæ, et cujuscunque generis acta publica* … , ed. G. Holmes. 3rd edn. 10 vols. (The Hague: apud Joannem Neaulme, 1739–45), 4, part 2: 109. In April Cliderowe and 10 other people were granted permission to travel freely around Holland conducting their business: see Allmand, *Henry V*, 79.
[62] TNA, E 403/621, m. 5.
[63] E 403/621, m. 6.
[64] E 403/624, m. 3.
[65] Sumption, *Cursed Kings*, 813, n. 18, cites TNA, E 364/66, m. 1, and notes that Cliderowe spent just under £10,000 hiring foreign ships; however, this roll dates to 1432 and no mention of Cliderowe's activities in 1415 is enrolled on m.1.

For example, Juliet Barker estimates that these sums hired 631 ships, but Barker did not notice all the payments and assumed the money was used solely for the purpose of hiring vessels.[66] We also do not know if the February and April payments were for two fleets, or two instalments for one fleet. It could be that the hiring of foreign ships followed the principles set out in the recruitment of land troops. This would have meant the ships' crews would be paid half of their first quarter's wages when they were hired, followed by the second half at the time of their muster.[67] In the 1420s, the crown hired its own ships out under the terms of a whole-ship charter, in which each vessel with its crew was hired for a specified period.[68] In 1415, this practice does not seem to have been followed and the payments make it clear that monies for hire and wages were paid in separate instalments. In effect English officials took just over three months to hire the foreign ships.

Barker's estimate of the size of the foreign contingent is based on the assumption that Henry hired vessels at a cost of 2s. per ton, a figure based on the crown's practice of paying shipowners 'ton-tight'.[69] Ton-tight was implemented by the English crown in 1380 in response to parliamentary petitions from shipowners who asked the king to pay them monetary compensation to cover the costs of ship requisition.[70] Under the 1380 terms, the king agreed to pay each shipowner 3s. 4d. for each ton of their vessel for every three months it remained in service, although in 1385 this was lowered to 2s.[71] It is likely that the foreign crews began their service in mid-May when the Cinque Ports crews were paid to escort the foreign contingent to Southampton. Indeed, we know that the foreign ships were to be made ready at Winchelsea, London or Sandwich by 8 May.[72]

In order to move beyond the length of service and estimate the size of the foreign contingent we need to know the rate at which Henry hired the ships. While the crown paid English shipowners 2s. per ton per quarter, this does not mean he hired foreign ships at this rate. Henry had no prerogatives of requisition for foreign ships and their hire costs were probably greater than the rates he paid in England. Fortunately, we can look to Henry's other campaigns for evidence. In 1416 and 1417 Henry hired foreign ships at the rate of 3s. 4d. per ton per quarter.[73] If Henry paid similar sums in 1415, the £2449 6s. 9d. spent hiring ships would have amounted to 14,696 tons of shipping. The records relating to the service of hired foreign ships over 1417 show they averaged 57 tons. Using this average as a guide, 14,696 tons of shipping equates to 258 ships.[74] If the

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[66] Barker, *Agincourt*, 98, has £5050.

[67] Curry, *Agincourt*, 56.

[68] Robin Ward, *The World of the Medieval Shipmaster* (Woodbridge: Boydell, 2009), 63–4.

[69] Barker, *Agincourt*, 98.

[70] *PROME*, 6: 179 'pur chescun tunnetight d'yceulx lours vesseulx pur chescun quarter del an q'ils demurront en la service nostre seignour le roi 3s. 4d.' ('they shall receive a payment of 3s. 4d. for every ton weight of those their vessels for each quarter in which they remain in the service of our lord the king').

[71] *PROME*, 6: 179, and 7: 25, 51. Anthony Saul, 'Great Yarmouth in the Fourteenth Century' (D.Phil. diss., University of Oxford, 1975), 135, argued that in the early fifteenth century the rate was increased to 3s. 4d. Yet this is not so certain. It is true that in the October 1404 Parliament the Commons asked the king to pay 3s. 4d. per ton per quarter, but the king stated that 'let the good, ancient ordinances in this matter be upheld.' The problem is the evidence that the rate was increased between 1385 and 1404 is difficult to interpret. In 1386 the Commons had asked for 3s. 4d. per ton per quarter, but Richard II made no decision and only committed the request to his council. Thus in 1404 the Commons may have asked for an increase to 3s. 4d., but Henry's reply implies the crown told the Commons that the 'ancient ordinances (i.e. 2s.) stand in this matter'. *PROME*, 7: 51; and 8: 306.

[72] *CPR, 1413–16*, 342–3.

[73] TNA, E 364/57; E 101/48/30; E 101/49/7.

[74] A ship of 57 tons hired at 3s. 4d. per ton per quarter would cost Henry £9 10s. for a quarter year's service; £2449 6s. 9d. would cover the hire of 258 ships. TNA, E 101/48/15; E 101/48/18; E 101/48/22; E 101/48/28; E 101/48/30; E 101/49/1; E 101/49/7; E 101/49/16.

ships were smaller, more could have been sourced, but as Henry was hiring the ships he could afford to be selective. Occasionally smaller ships were hired by Henry. In 1417 to 1418 two ships from Dordrecht at 30 and 36 tons were hired.[75] Smaller ships had the advantage of being able to sail up rivers and could be used more effectively in sieges of coastal towns. For the transport fleet of 1415, for which the army needed transporting in one go, Henry would have sought to hire vessels over 40 tons. The wage costs – £4577 7s. 6d. – provide a further indication. At this time mariners were paid 3d. and masters 6d. per day, and both types of crewman received 6d. per week in regard, that is, to simplify things, 4d. per day and 7d. per day respectively.[76] Therefore the wages of one mariner for a quarter year's service (91 days) were £1 10s. 4d. and for each master £2 13s. 1d. Two hundred and fifty-eight masters for three months would cost £684 15s. 6d., leaving £3892 12s. for mariners' wages, a sum which would hire approximately 2566 mariners. In all the money would have paid for the wages of approximately 2824 sea-farers, which equates to 11 men per ship.[77] These may seem small crew sizes, but it is worth noting that in 1417 ships of Gowe and Middleburgh hired by Henry at 60 tons were manned by eight men and those of 100 tons by 11 men.[78]

Henry did not rely solely on hired ships and over the spring began the process of requisitioning English vessels. We can investigate the question of the number of English ships needed by Henry by looking at the size and composition of his army and comparing this with the transportation to France of earlier armies. Henry's army consisted of 11,248 fighting men, of which 2266 were men-at-arms and 8982 were archers.[79] In 1346 Edward III shipped an army of 14,000 fighting men to Saint-Vaast-la-Hougue in 750 ships. The army of 1346 included at least 2800 men-at-arms and 2800 mounted archers and hobelars.[80] In 1375, 3975 mounted men, half of whom were men-at-arms, were shipped in 180 vessels, which averaged just over 70 tons each.[81] The evidence from earlier expeditions shows that to ship an army of 10,000 to 15,000 men required 500 to 750 ships.[82] Given Henry had hired 258 foreign ships his officials needed to requisition approximately 450 ships from domestic ports.

The task of assembling several hundred ships began on 1 March when John Everdon was issued with 60s. to pay the wages of mariners in the ports of Southampton and Bristol.[83] This payment preceded an order issued on 19 March to the admiral who was told to arrest all ships over 20 tons and have them at Southampton by 8 May.[84] On 11 April, Nicholas Mauduyt, sergeant-at-arms, was ordered to seize all ships of the realm, including foreign vessels, from the mouth of the River Thames to Newcastle and have the English vessels sent to Southampton by 1 May.[85] To cover his expenses on 27 April

[75] E 101/48/22.
[76] Regard was not always issued (see, for example, E 403/619, m. 13); however, records from 1417 and 1422–4 show that it was regularly paid, especially to foreign crews: see E 101/48/22; E 101/51/10.
[77] If we included one page per ship these numbers would be increased slightly.
[78] E 101/49/1; E 101/49/7, m. 1.
[79] Curry, *Agincourt*, 65–72. With the addition of non-combatants there may have been close to 14,000 men requiring shipping.
[80] Ayton and Preston, *Crécy*, 189.
[81] Sherborne, 'English Navy', 170, 173; James W. Sherborne, 'Indentured Retinues and English Expeditions to France, 1369–1380', *English Historical Review* 79 (1964): 718–46 (730); TNA, E 101/36/14; E 101/33/31.
[82] Lambert, *Shipping*, Chapter 3.
[83] TNA, E 403/619, m. 16.
[84] *CClR, 1413–19*, 162.
[85] *CPR, 1413–16*, 342–3.

1415 Mauduyt was issued with 66s. 8d.[86] On 27 April William Trisham and Robert Spellowe, sergeant-at-arms, were given £300 for arresting ships from the Thames to Bristol.[87] On 18 May John Barcelot was issued with 60s. 6d. to cover the expenses of the admiral for arresting 'all ships in the Thames' (omnes naves infra aquam Thames).[88] At the same time the king ordered the masters of seven royal ships to arrest mariners.[89] In July, the process of gathering ships continued as John Acclane and John Scaldock were told to arrest all the ships in London over 20 tons.[90] Subsequent evidence reveals that Henry's officials were successful in their duties because the crown was still paying arrears to English mariners in October.[91] We also know that John Everdon compiled a payroll – now lost – for the English fleet.[92] The king's ships Katerine of the Tower, Nicholas of the Tower, Trinite Roiale, Petit Trinite of the Tower, Gabriell of the Tower, Rodecoge, Philip, Thomas and the Petit Marie of the Tower were also involved in the crossing.[93] In 1338 it took Edward III's officials approximately five months to raise a fleet of over 400 ships.[94] Henry issued requisition orders in March, his officials received payments for their duties in March and April, and his transport fleet sailed in August. Therefore Henry's officials took six months to organise the English contingent of ships.

While the transport fleet was being assembled, preparations were also underway to put to sea several smaller flotillas to guard the coast and protect the gathering transport ships. On 5 December 1414, William Catton, clerk of the king's ships, was issued with £305 14s. for a fleet that would safeguard the sea under the command of Gilbert, Lord Talbot.[95] In February 1415, the Council put forward a more defined strategy to protect the gathering transport ships. This involved three flotillas, each one given a specific area to cover. One, consisting of two ships at 120 tons and two barges of 100 tons, would protect the coast from Plymouth to the Isle of Wight. The second flotilla would patrol from the Isle of Wight to Orford with two barges of 100 tons and two balingers, an oared vessel similar to, but probably smaller than, a barge.[96] The third would cover the coast from Orford to Berwick with one barge and two balingers.[97] The manpower needed for these fleets was estimated to be 252 men-at-arms, 252 archers and 806 mariners.

On 18 February, Lord Talbot and Thomas Carewe were ordered to go to sea 'as captains and leaders of the men-at-arms and archers whom the king proposes to send to sea for the resistance of his enemies'.[98] Wages were issued on 27 February to put three flotillas to sea. Firstly, £600 was issued to Lord Talbot and 120 men-at-arms and 240 archers, the force supplemented by retinues brought by Hugh Standish (20 men-at-arms and 40 archers)

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[86] TNA, E 403/621, m. 4.

[87] CPR, 1413–16, 343; TNA, E 403/621, m. 4.

[88] E 403/621, mm. 2, 6.

[89] Rymer, Foedera, ed. Holmes, 4, part 2: 138.

[90] CPR, 1413–16, 344.

[91] CPR, 1413–16, 370, 373, 377, 382.

[92] CPR, 1413–16, 370, 373, 377, 382.

[93] CPR, 1413–16, 347; Friel, Henry V's Navy, 106.

[94] Lambert, Shipping, 104.

[95] TNA, E 403/619, m. 8.

[96] On barges and balingers, see James W. Sherborne, 'English Barges and Balingers of the Late Fourteenth Century', Mariner's Mirror 63 (1977): 109–14.

[97] Nicholas H. Nicolas, ed. Proceedings and Ordinances of the Privy Council of England, vol. 2 (London: G. Eyre and A. Spottiswoode, 1834), 145–6. The crown probably put at least 20 ships to sea. Average crew sizes suggest that 20 to 50 ships would have been manned by between 300 and 600 mariners.

[98] CPR, 1413–16, 294.

and John Burgh (10 men-at-arms and 20 archers) at a cost of £150.[99] Secondly, £264 was disbursed to 50 men-at-arms and 100 archers who were to go to sea from Hull.[100] Finally, at Dartmouth, Thomas Carewe, John Clifford and Robert Rudyngton were issued with £996 5s. for the service of 97 men-at-arms and 320 archers for 55 days, who sailed in a fleet of seven ships manned by 234 mariners and 24 boys.[101] The number of seafarers in Carewe's flotilla was later supplemented by men raised by Robert Welton.[102] On 26 April and 1 May Rudyngton was paid a further £66 13s. 4d., for guarding a fleet of wine ships captured by Carewe's flotilla earlier in the year.[103] In total 247 men-at-arms and 320 archers were employed in naval patrols, which more or less matched the numbers set by the council in February. On 19 June another flotilla was prepared to transport to Gascony a force of 80 men-at-arms and 400 archers under John Tiptoft.[104] Protecting the coast and the gathering fleet was an expensive undertaking. From 5 December 1414 to 1 May 1415 at least £2089 16s 4d. was issued for the wages of men-at-arms, archers and sailors.[105]

In addition to transporting the army, protecting the coast and the gathering ships a flotilla of English vessels was kept on extended service from 1 August for six weeks. These included ships, balingers and barges from Bridgwater, Cromer, Hull, London, Sandwich, Winchelsea and King's Lynn.[106] It is likely these vessels were used to ship the sick back from Harfleur and bring supplies to the army. Some vessels must have been kept outside Harfleur for longer than six weeks because on 5 October John Mowbray was shipped back to England in the *Nicholas* of Hull.[107] There was a *Nicholas* of Hull commanded by William Saunderson that was kept on extended service outside Harfleur, although the order for repayment suggests that Saunderson completed his service on 8 September 1415.[108] Unfortunately, only eight ships are visible in the records as serving from 1 August for six weeks, but the order to pay arrears makes it clear more served.

All told, from February to September 1415 Henry probably put to sea 700 to 750 ships, both foreign and domestic. The transport fleet for his invasion of France numbered approximately 700 ships, composed of 258 foreign vessels (approximately 36% of the fleet) and some 450 English (approximately 64% of the fleet), while the coastguard fleets probably consisted of 20 to 30 ships. Estimates of manpower levels for the transport fleet can be put forward based on average crew sizes in other expeditions. Three fleets that sailed in 1413, 1423 and 1440 averaged 18 mariners per ship, meaning the 1415 fleet may

[99] *CPR, 1413–16*, 294; TNA, E 403/619, m. 13.

[100] E 403/619, m. 13.

[101] E 403/619, m. 13.

[102] E 403/619, m. 13.

[103] E 403/621, mm. 3–4; *CPR, 1413–16*, 348. Carewe's flotilla must have captured these ships between February and May. After capturing these vessels and taking them to the south-west ports, the seafarers of Devon and Cornwall helped themselves to these ships. On 26 May the king ordered them found and brought to Southampton for safe-keeping. In expectation of this, on 1 May Rudyngton's service was extended.

[104] *CPR, 1413–16*, 347.

[105] TNA, E 403/619, mm. 8–13; E 403/621, mm. 3–4. On 27 February Welton paid £12 18s for the wages of mariners (E 403/619, m.13). English mariners were not only active in Henry's French adventure. In the summer of 1415, and despite a royal order forbidding them to do so, some London ships participated in the Portuguese assault on Ceuta: see P.E. Russell, *Prince Henry 'the Navigator': a Life* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000), 30–1; 377, n. 7.

[106] *CPR, 1413–16*, 370, 373, 377, 382.

[107] Anne Curry, 'Personal Links and the Nature of the English War Retinue: a Case Study of John Mowbray, Earl Marshal, and the Campaign of 1415', in *Liens personnels, réseaux, solidarités en France et dans les Îles britanniques XIe–XXe siècle*, ed. D. Bates and others (Paris: Publications de la Sorbonne, 2006), 153–67.

[108] *CPR, 1413–16*, 382.

have been manned by 11,700 to 12,600 seamen.[109] The numbers of foreign ships hired in 1415 fitted with the precedents set by Henry's predecessors. In 1373, of 220 ships that took John of Gaunt to Calais, 105 (52%) were foreign; and in 1380, out of a fleet of 276 ships that sailed to Calais, 147 (53.2%) were foreign.[110] This trend continued beyond 1415. In 1417, 129 (50%) of the known 256 ships that transported Henry's army to Normandy came from the Low Countries.[111]

Men need little space aboard and for the logistical planners the ability to move horses was the key to a successful operation. How many horses did Henry's forces take? In 1370 an English army of approximately 4000 men transported 8464 horses with them to France.[112] In 1412, the duke of Clarence's army of 4000 men had shipped with them 8000 horses, and many of these were lightly armed combatants who would not have brought many horses.[113] We know Henry's army in 1415 consisted of 2266 men-at-arms and 8982 archers, but with non-combatants the number of men that needed shipping might have approached 14,000. The term 'man-at-arms' was all-encompassing and, for military purposes, included men of comital, knightly and sub-knightly status. From the last quarter of the fourteenth century to the period of Henry V's French war, profound changes occurred in the composition of English armies. These are too complex to be developed here, but the most important are the rise of the mounted archer and a reduction of knightly combatants.[114] Evidence shows that esquires and *homines ad arma* were not permitted to ship as many horses as knights. On the other hand, most of the archers were probably mounted.[115] Each duke was allowed to take 50 horses, earls 24, barons and bannerets 16, knights six, esquires four and each archer was allowed one.[116] According to his indenture, the duke of York was permitted to ship 770 horses, for a retinue of approximately 450 men.[117] The Earl Marshal took at least 24 horses to Harfleur and his knights had six each. On their return to England, the remaining 138 men of the Marshal's retinue brought back 345 horses, while the 279 men remaining from York's retinue shipped back 329 horses.[118] In short we know that retinues contained more horses than men and we know the numbers of horses each type of combatant was permitted to bring. Taking the latter points into consideration, and with the addition of several hundred animals brought to haul baggage, Henry probably shipped 18,000 to 20,000 horses. We know English fleets were capable of freighting large numbers of horses. In 1356, 23 ships transported 644 horses (28 per ship) and, in 1375, 11 vessels moved 562 horses (51 per ship).[119] In 1423, six ships freighted 183 horses for the Earl Marshal

[109] TNA, E 101/44/20; E 101/51/7; E 101/53/25.
[110] BL, Add. MS 37494, ff. 17v–23v; TNA, E 101/39/2.
[111] Hardy, ed., *Rotuli Normanniae*, 321–9; TNA, E 101/48/8; E 101/48/15; E 101/48/18; E 101/48/22–6, 28, 30; E 101/49/1; E 101/49/3; E 101/49/7; E 101/49/16.
[112] Frederick Devon, ed. and trans., *The Issue Roll of Thomas Brantingham, Bishop of Exeter, Lord High Treasurer of England, A.D. 1370* (London: John Rodwell, 1835), 269.
[113] James Hamilton Wylie, *History of England under Henry the Fourth*. 4 vols. (London: Longmans Green and Co., 1884–98), 4: 74–7.
[114] See Bell and others, *Soldier*, 100–17.
[115] Curry, *Agincourt*, 69–70; 260, n. 88, shows that 65% of the duke of York's archers had one horse. The earl of Dorset's archers were allowed one horse each.
[116] Barker, *Agincourt*, 118.
[117] TNA, E 101/694/398. After the campaign 279 men from York's retinue shipped back 329 horses: see E 101/47/40, m. 2. I would like to thank Dr Gary Baker for showing me these records.
[118] Curry, *Agincourt*, 69–70; Curry, 'Personal Links'. York's retinue, see TNA, E 101/47/40, m. 2.
[119] Lambert, *Shipping*, 95.

(30 per ship).[120] Averaging the numbers across the whole fleet would mean that in 1415 each vessel shipped approximately 18 men (perhaps 31 if we include non-combatants) and 30 horses. Even so, we know that Henry failed to raise a sufficient number of ships for his needs.[121] The main reason for this was that while the king had enough ships to transport his men, Henry's army was equipped for siege and conquest and the extra baggage probably reduced the carrying capacity of the ships.

After two days at sea, the fleet arrived outside Harfleur and the king held a council of war before issuing an order forbidding anyone from attempting a landing before the king, most likely in the interests of keeping order, but also allowing Henry to be the first ashore and symbolically to claim France.[122] The following day the earl of Huntingdon was sent from the fleet with a patrol to reconnoitre the surrounding area. Once Huntingdon had scouted the area, the process of unloading began. The harbour of Harfleur was protected by walls and its entrance was blocked by tree trunks.[123] This meant Henry's army had to disembark on the shore. Troops and supplies were relatively easy to move off the ships; unloading horses was more problematic. Unfortunately, we have no definitive evidence of how horses were unloaded off ships in a hostile land with no suitable docking facilities. Henry's men could have built a temporary structure to facilitate unloading, or swam the horses to shore. Perhaps a better solution was to beach the ships, or keep them at low water, and lower the horses onto smaller vessels or lighters. Robin Ward describes how horses could be loaded off ships and onto smaller craft by mariners using hoists, blocks, slings and muscle power.[124] In 1370 the forces under Robert Knolles moved their horses from the land to their ships in 11 'schoutes'.[125] That the latter technique was employed in 1415 is hinted at by the author of the *Gesta* who tells us that the 'king with the greater part of his army, came in to land using barges, launches and skiffs; and he at once made for the nearest high ground in the direction of Harfleur.'[126] The unloading took three days, after which Henry's next move was the siege of Harfleur.

Conclusion

This article has reconstructed one of the most important logistical operations of the Hundred Years War. The lack of navy payrolls has created challenges, but nonetheless it is possible to point to four key conclusions. Firstly, the fleet that sailed out of the Solent and from other points in August 1415 probably numbered 700 ships. Secondly, English ships formed two-thirds of the fleet. Thirdly, there was a sophisticated and well-planned series of naval operations, which probably involved 20 or 30 ships, designed

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[120] TNA, E 101/51/8.

[121] Curry, *Agincourt*, 71; Wylie, *Henry V*, 2: 2. Nicolas, *Royal Navy*, 409, note c, argues that 100 ships were left behind because Henry had more than he needed. It seems unlikely that Henry would have left men behind if he had empty ships waiting at Southampton.

[122] Taylor and Roskell, eds., *Gesta Henrici quinti*, 21, says the fleet sailed on Sunday (11 August) and arrived at Harfleur on Tuesday (13 August) at 5 o'clock in the afternoon.

[123] Taylor and Roskell, eds., *Gesta Henrici quinti*, 27–31.

[124] Ward, *Medieval Shipmaster*, 158. See also Curry, 'Southern England: the Campaigns to France', for evidence of horses being loaded onto ships by slings at the port of Poole.

[125] Devon, *Issue Roll of Thomas Brantingham*, 269. Schoutes were small craft used to freight bulky cargoes inland and over short sea crossings: see Burwash, *English Merchant Shipping*, 140.

[126] Taylor and Roskell, eds., *Gesta Henrici quinti*, 23–5: 'Rex cum maiore parte exercitus sui naviculis, batellis et cimbis terre se appluit et statim peciit proximum montem versus Harfleur.'

to guard the coast and protect the gathering transport ships. Fourthly, the project fell short of Henry's expectations and did not assemble a fleet sufficient for his needs. Yet, we should not be harsh in our judgement. Organising logistical operations on this scale was one of the most difficult tasks any medieval government could attempt, made more complex by Henry's intention to conduct a campaign of conquest by sieges and carry an army equipped to this end. It is worth stressing that Edward III's attempts to requisition the fleet of 1346 had taken over nine months. Viewed in this context, Henry's ability to organise in six months a fleet of a similar size was a significant achievement. It is a perfect example of the ingenuity and sophistication of the English war machine at this time, and it helps to explain how England managed to maintain a war against a more populous and richer kingdom for so long. The fleet of 1415 marked the beginning of a new phase of the Hundred Years War, but it also saw the passing of the great logistical operations that stretched back to the campaigns of Edward III. After the Agincourt campaign, the English would never again during the Hundred Years War assemble a fleet of this magnitude.[127]

Notes on contributor

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[127] A similar size fleet may have been raised in 1417, but we cannot be certain.