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THE HUNDRED YEARS' WAR

THE ENGLISH NAVY: SHIPPING AND MANPOWER 1369-1389*

IN HIS ARTICLE ON "THE COSTS OF THE HUNDRED YEARS' WAR",[†] Professor Postan remarked that "the most obvious real cost was that of manpower diverted to war-making and in the first place that of soldiers in the field and in garrisons". But, he added, "in sheer numbers even more important were the naval forces".¹ The emphasis which he placed on the naval forces is all the more striking because historians of the Hundred Years' War have in the past concentrated their attention almost entirely on the military side of the war, and very little evidence has been produced about the war at sea.² In the course of his wide-ranging article, Postan himself made reference to only two naval forces and they are separated in time by almost eighty years: a fighting fleet led by Sir Walter Magny in 1337 and the transport "armada" which took Henry V's army to France in 1415. Postan also remarked that the mobilization of shipping for transport purposes was another "economic disturbance" which should be included among the real costs of the war, but he did not point out that this was likewise true when ships were required for purely naval operations.

The purpose of this paper is to examine Postan's interesting generalizations in the light of some hitherto unpublished evidence. It would not be possible to do so fully without making a complete survey of English fleets during the whole period of the war. Here the situation is examined within the limited framework of one important phase of the war. In the twenty years between 1369 and 1389 England and France (sometimes reinforced by her powerful ally Castile) were continuously at war except for the truces of 27 June 1375 to 1 April 1377 and 24 January 1384 to 1 May 1385. During this period there were extensive demands on shipping and manpower for

* I am indebted to my colleague Mr. P. V. McGrath for kindly reading and criticizing this paper.

† M. M. Postan, "The Costs of the Hundred Years' War", *Past and Present*, no. 27 (April, 1964).

¹ Postan, *op. cit.*, pp. 34-5, 39.

² The period discussed has received no attention since N. H. Nicolas, *History of the Royal Navy* (London, 1847), ii, pp. 130-55, 258-330.

both transport and for naval operations. Whether they were greater than they had been before 1360 has yet to be established. They certainly appear to have been larger than they were for 1422-1440.³ The survey will not cover every expedition, for this would involve little less than a naval history of the period; nevertheless reference will be made to all major and most minor fleets.

In assessing naval requirements in relation to manpower we must emphasize that in addition to ships and sailors the war at sea required a very large number of soldiers. The rôle of soldiers in later medieval naval warfare has not received the attention it deserves. They were essential to fighting strength; in fact there was rarely any major disparity between the numbers of soldiers and sailors engaged in fighting fleets. With the exception of a minority who were impressed,⁴ soldiers went to sea as members of indentured retinues; directly or indirectly they were parties to freely negotiated contracts with the crown and served because they chose to do so. Apart from the absence of horses, naval retinues were similar to military retinues. The captains might be the same men who on other occasions led troops to France, and among those who sailed with them there were many who were familiar with land warfare. Men-at-arms and archers carried the same weapons as they did on land, and as in military companies there were usually equal numbers of men-at-arms and bowmen. Rates of pay were the same, although the regard paid to men-at-arms was usually lower⁵ — probably due to the fact that horses were unnecessary. As on land there were wide variations in the size of retinues.

The position of sailors and shipowners was very different. Most vessels and virtually all sailors were conscripted by commissions of impressment. There was no voluntary principle here; merely an old and valuable royal right which was hard to evade. The collection of fleets began with the despatch of royal agents, commonly sergeants-at-arms, from port to port with power to arrest vessels and crews. Their visits were unpopular and there is ample evidence of dilatory responses by shipowners and the reluctance of mariners to serve. To cite but two examples, in 1380 two sergeants-at-arms were driven into a barn at Wells in Norfolk where they were besieged and in 1374 the

³ C. F. Richmond, "The Keeping of the Seas during the Hundred Years War: 1422-1440", *History*, xlix (1964), pp. 283-98; cf. also the same author's "English Naval Power in the Fifteenth Century", *History*, lii (1967), pp. 1-15.

⁴ Cf. T. Rymer, *Foedera* (London, 1816-69), iii (2), pp. 973-4, 998-9, 1001.

⁵ With the exception of 1372, when a double regard was paid, naval retinues received either a single regard or, more commonly, a regard paid at 150 per cent of the customary rate.

master of the king's ship, *The Dieulagarde*, was unable to collect a crew because sailors had withdrawn into hiding.⁶ There are numerous examples of desertions after arrest and payment of wages. This is scarcely surprising for long periods of arrest were common, and as the Commons complained in 1372 and 1373 crews might be detained without pay.⁷ One instance of this occurred in 1372 when 621 sailors, the crews of twenty-four ships, were held for 105 days before their wages began.⁸

The war at sea involved shipowners in a contribution to royal needs which was in effect a tax on capital assets, a burden of a type unknown to other sections of the community. Before 1380 no payment of any kind was made for the use of impressed shipping. Compensation for loss of ships was a rare event. Shares of prizes, it is true, might offset loss of freights and sometimes bring great profits, but it is unlikely that expectations in this period were great. Yet, although frequency of arrest caused resentment, the royal right to impress was so ancient that it was not questioned and discontent was mainly directed to two points: arrest of vessels long before they were sent to sea and demand for compensation, reiterated in 1373, 1378 and 1380, for loss or deterioration of masts, sails, cables and other equipment arising from royal service.⁹ In 1380 the crown conceded the justice of the latter complaint by granting, until the next parliament, a payment of 3s. 4d. per quarter for each ton of carrying capacity (*tontyght*). This, it was stressed, was an act of grace.¹⁰ It was also a significant reaction, at a time when money was short, to parliamentary pressure. There was no question of *hiring* shipping: the grant was for maintenance. As far as we know it was not formally renewed until October 1385 when shipowners had to be content with a reduced rate, payable until the next parliament, of 2s. per ton. Payments were however sometimes made in the years 1381 to 1385.¹¹ In October 1386 a request for their renewal at the original rate was referred to the council; some, if not all, vessels serving in 1387 received the 2s. rate. In 1388, despite failure to elicit a clear response from the Merciless Parliament, shipowners received 2s. per ton.¹²

⁶ *Cal. Pat. Rolls, 1377-81*, p. 475; P[ublic] R[ecord] O[ffice], French Rolls, C. 76/57, m. 16.

⁷ *Rotuli Parliamentorum*, ii, pp. 311, 319-20.

⁸ P.R.O., Exchequer of Receipt, Issue Rolls, E. 403/446 m. 38.

⁹ *Rot. Parl.*, ii, p. 320; iii, pp. 66, 86.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, iii, p. 86. The Navigation Act of 1381 provides further proof of concern for the merchant navy.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, iii, p. 212; P.R.O., K.R., Exchequer Accounts Various, E. 101/39/17; 40/9.

¹² *Rot. Parl.*, iii, pp. 223, 253; P.R.O., E. 403/518, m. 11 ff.; 521, m. 6 ff.

Complaints that impressed vessels often spent long, profitless periods in port before expeditions sailed were fully justified. In November 1372 the Commons claimed that a chief cause of naval weakness was the frequent arrest of ships three months before they were needed; a year later they stated that the delay might last as long as six months.¹³ The uncertainties of Edward III's strategy in 1372 had undoubtedly involved long periods of arrest and when John, lord Nevill sailed to Brittany in mid-October 1372 some of his fleet had been under arrest since May. In the fleet which transported an army to Brittany in April 1375, there were fifty-four ships which had been under arrest since September 1374 and thirty-five which had been impressed in the following month.¹⁴ In 1377 at least thirty-two ships of the northern admiralty held in the Thames on 26 September had been at the king's disposal since March or April. Sixteen or more of them were not dismissed until January 1377.¹⁵

Impressed shipping was the most important constituent of the fleets of this period, but the crown had other resources at its disposal. There were (i) the king's own ships, (ii) vessels from the Cinque Ports, (iii) barges and balingers built as a result of parliamentary decisions in 1372 and 1377, and (iv) foreign vessels hired for transport purposes.

Between 1369 and the truce of 1375 nearly forty royal vessels can be identified.¹⁶ Most of them were ships, but there were at least seven barges, and one galley of 140 oars. *The Dieulagarde* (300 tons) was the largest ship; there were four others of 200 tons and at least eleven of between 100 and 180 tons. Between campaigns the king's ships were laid up at Redcliffe below London Bridge. Their permanent establishment excluding administrative and maintenance men was confined to masters, the "king's sailors". For private shipowners it was a bone of contention that when royal vessels were sent to sea, crews of merchantmen were arrested to man them.

The king's ships were not exceptionally large and, apart from the galley, their fighting potential may not have been greater than that of impressed vessels. It is, however, likely that their crews were better armed. Royal vessels were numerically most prominent in 1369, when at least twenty-seven were at sea for varying periods between 4 June and 6 December, in 1370, and in 1372 when perhaps twenty served during September and October. In 1373, a year of sustained

¹³ *Rot. Parl.*, ii, pp. 311, 316.

¹⁴ P.R.O., E. 101/676/32; 33/31.

¹⁵ P.R.O., E. 101/34/25; 37/15, 13, 18, 7, 14, 17; 38/18.

¹⁶ P.R.O., E. 101/29/39; 30/13, 15; 31/23; 36/14; Brit. Mus., Add. MS. 37494, f. 23d.

operations, seven ships, two barges and the galley were employed; in 1374 the fleet led by Sir William Nevill and Sir Philip Courtenay included about thirteen royal ships, perhaps a third of those which sailed. This was the last occasion in the fourteenth century when the king's ships made a significant contribution to the navy. Had the government been dependent on them as the backbone of its seapower much less could have been attempted than was in fact the case. The fate of Edward III's ships is unclear. Before his death some may have been lost at sea, and at least one had been given away;¹⁷ others may have been sold before or after he died. By September 1378 only five remained; two of which had been newly equipped for Lancaster's expedition; another was "without equipment" (*sine apparatu*).¹⁸ The *Dieulagarde*, on which Lancaster had sailed in 1378, was later given to Sir William Elmham and on 12 October 1380 the sale of *The Gracedieu*, *The Mighel*, *The New St. Mary* and the galley was ordered. The proceeds were to be used to pay off the debts of Robert Crull, who had been Clerk of the king's ships from 6 October 1359 to 22 September 1378.¹⁹ This marked the dissolution of the fourteenth-century "royal navy".

By 1369 the obligation of the Cinque Ports to supply once a year at their own expense fifty-seven ships, each manned by twenty-one sailors, for fifteen days was ancient. However, demands for unpaid service occur infrequently between 1369 and 1389 and when they were made the number of vessels required was much reduced; on the other hand crews were expected to be larger and the period of service somewhat longer. In 1372, for example, the ports were ordered to find six ships or barges for a month's service,²⁰ and in 1387 to finance ten vessels for twenty days manned by 600 soldiers and sailors. In the event the vessels served with crews totalling 580 sailors. The soldiers' wages were paid by the crown.²¹

On two occasions service by the Ports was a matter for negotiation. In October 1378 the government ordered the war treasurers, John Philipot and William Walworth, to make the best bargain they could in return for a payment of 1,000 marks: service between 26 October

¹⁷ Camb. Univ. Lib., MS. Dd. 3. 53, f. 57. I am indebted to Dr. A. L. Brown for allowing me to use his transcription of this document. Another was granted in 1378 to the keepers of Brest, Sir Richard Abberbury and Sir John Golafre on 15 April 1378: P.R.O., C. 76/62, m. 8.

¹⁸ P.R.O., E. 101/38/13; 37/27, nos. 52, 149.

¹⁹ *Cal. Pat. Rolls*, 1358-61, p. 302; P.R.O., L.T.R., Enrolled Accounts, E. 364/20, m. 3.

²⁰ *Foedera*, iii (2) p. 940.

²¹ *Cal. Close Rolls*, 1385-89, p. 208; P.R.O., E. 101/40/36.

and 25 December by eight vessels was arranged.²² In September 1380, the Warden of the Cinque Ports was instructed to treat with representatives of the Ports for a contribution in money or ships.²³ The outcome is unknown.

But if their traditional obligations counted for relatively little, squadrons of vessels from the Cinque Ports, employed at royal expense, frequently defended the Narrow Seas, and sometimes the sea northwards to the mouth of the Thames. They were engaged each year from 1372-5,²⁴ in 1378,²⁵ in 1380 (when they escorted Buckingham's army from Sandwich to Calais),²⁶ and during the winter of 1382-83.²⁷ These forces were small in comparison with Channel fleets, but the prominence of barges and balingers made them well suited to their area of operations. In 1373, for example, nine barges and one balinger were engaged for differing periods between the end of March and 24 December; these were at maximum strength in July and August when nine vessels commanded by Sir Ralf Ferrers were at sea "for the custody of the narrow sea" (*pro custodia stricti maris*).

Twice in these years the government increased its naval resources by requiring selected towns, some of them inland, to build barges or balingers at their own costs. These galley-type vessels, equipped with oars and sail, had greater speed and manoeuvrability than ships and were commonly employed in Channel fleets as well as in the Narrows. They were particularly useful for scouting and for quick crossings to France. Both types, however, were suitable for commerce. As a general rule barges were of greater tonnage and carried more oars. On one occasion balingers are described as "small barges" (*parvae bargeae*),²⁸ but contemporaries were often at a loss to distinguish between types. In 1374 we find a barge named *The Balinger* and examples of balingers carrying more oars and of greater tonnage than "barges" are not uncommon.²⁹

In the parliament of November 1372, following a demoralizing summer when the enemy had held the initiative at sea, the crown indicated its vigorous intentions for the following year. Part of its programme was the construction of new barges. On the first day of

²² P.R.O., E. 101/37/27 no. 130, 39/3.

²³ *Cal. Close Rolls, 1377-81*, p. 405.

²⁴ P.R.O., E. 101/31/32; Brit. Mus., Add. MS. 37494, ff. 25v-26; P.R.O., E. 403/451, m. 29 and 454 mm. 5, 19; P.R.O., E. 101/34/8, 9.

²⁵ P.R.O., E. 101/39/3.

²⁶ P.R.O., E. 101/39/2.

²⁷ P.R.O., E. 101/39/32.

²⁸ *Cal. Close Rolls, 1377-81*, p. 32.

²⁹ P.R.O., C. 76/57, m. 16; E. 101/42/21.

the assembly London was ordered to build two by 1 April 1373; instructions to other towns to build one barge followed.³⁰ Heavy costs were involved and in some places there was opposition. At Norwich four additional tenths, perhaps £380,³¹ did not suffice to meet the bill and London, which in the event built only one barge, *The Paul* of eighty oars, spent £621.³² By August 1373 fourteen new barges had sailed,³³ most of which served again with Nevill and Courtenay in 1374.³⁴ Some of them also served in later years — with Buckingham in 1377, for example, and with Lancaster in 1378. But thereafter they are hard to identify in paymasters' accounts. In 1379 the York barge, described as *debilis*, was sold and by 1383 the Norwich barge was "quite rotten".³⁵ The value, therefore, of the 1372 expedient was relatively short-lived, but for some years it had strengthened the navy and helped to reduce the need for impressed shipping.

As in 1372 the summer of 1377 was also a bad one for England. Plans to send a Channel fleet to sea were abandoned after the death of Edward III, and when Castilian galleys arrived off the south coast they were able to take ample advantage of the absence of opposition.³⁶ In October there were bitter complaints in Parliament about neglect of naval defence.³⁷ The government, obviously prepared for criticism, requested a generous grant for 1378 and with the consent of the Commons ordered the building of thirty-two balingers of forty to fifty oars to be ready by 1 March 1378.³⁸ The towns which financed the balingers were promised free disposal of them at the end of the campaigning season and received confirmation of their charters without charge. A substantial number of new balingers served at sea in 1378; they are hard to identify in later years, but some were certainly employed again.

In the naval operations of these years the numerical importance of non-impressed shipping is almost entirely confined to the years 1369-78, varying considerably from year to year. In 1374, for

³⁰ P.R.O., E. 403/447, mm. 10, 14.

³¹ *Norwich Records*, ed. W. Hudson and J. C. Tingey (Norwich, 1906-10), ii, pp. 79-83.

³² *Calendar of Letter-Book G of the City of London*, ed. R. R. Sharpe (London, 1905), pp. 304, 310.

³³ Brit. Mus., Add. MS. 37494, f. 25v. ff.

³⁴ *Foedera*, iii (2), p. 998.

³⁵ *York Memorandum Book*, ed. M. Sellers (Surtees Soc., cxx [1912]), i, p. 33; *Cal. Pat. Rolls*, 1381-85, p. 295.

³⁶ Cf. P.R.O., E. 403/462, mm. 14-16.

³⁷ *Rct. Parl.*, iii, pp. 5, 6.

³⁸ *Foedera*, iv, p. 24; *Cal. Close Rolls*, 1377-81, p. 32.

example, royal ships and town barges made up more than half the fleet of perhaps forty vessels which served under Sir William Nevill and Sir Philip Courtenay. But this was an unusually high proportion and for the most part impressed merchantmen were in the majority in fighting fleets.

When Buckingham sailed in 1377 his fleet consisted almost entirely of impressed shipping, and in 1378 the newly-built balingers were only a minor element in Lancaster's expedition of more than 150 vessels.

The transport of armies overseas sometimes involved even larger demands on private shipping. In 1369, for example, about 250 vessels were employed in taking soldiers to Calais in June and September, and the army sent to Brittany in 1375 required approximately 180 ships.³⁹ Transport fleets, however, always included many small ships: in 1369 more than 120 were of fifty tons or less. Ships of this size were inappropriate for fighting fleets unless they were used in the auxiliary rôle of victuallers. Fortunately for shipowners the crown sometimes hired transport vessels from the Low Countries for transport purposes in order, it seems, to relieve the burden on English resources. Foreign ships were particularly important in the shipment of Lancaster's army of 1373 to France, when they outnumbered English vessels by 104 to 99, and in 1380 when 157 ships from Flanders, Brabant, Holland and Zeeland co-operated with eighty English vessels in the carriage of Buckingham's army.⁴⁰

Before individual fleets are considered it is necessary to stress that annual calls on shipping and manpower fluctuated considerably. There was an ebb and flow in both military and naval activity, which was largely determined by the availability of cash. There were no expeditions to France in 1371, 1374 and 1377; after 1380 only three overseas expeditions took place. At sea there were seasons when large and expensive fleets were despatched. On the other hand very little was done, for example, during the months of May to August in either 1369 or 1372. In the summers of 1377 and 1380, as we have seen, Castilian fleets had the freedom of the English seas, raiding as far as Gravesend in 1380. Activity was inadequate on other occasions: in 1381-83, for instance, and in 1386. This is not to imply that the government did not appreciate the value of seapower; it was a problem of choosing priorities in relation to available funds. Here repeated complaints in parliament that maritime interests were being

³⁹ P.R.O., E. 101/36/14; 33/31.

⁴⁰ Brit. Mus., Add. MS. 37494, fols. 17-23; P.R.O., E. 101/39/2.

neglected were an influential factor for grants of subsidies were often conditional on protection of the seas.

We may now consider the manpower requirements of the navy and draw some comparisons with those of the army. It has been suggested that, excluding garrison forces, some 30,000 soldiers, including a minority of foreigners, were engaged in the military expeditions of 1369-1380. The largest armies were those of 1369 and 1373 (each about 6,000 men), 1375 (about 4,000 men) and 1380 (about 5,200 men).⁴¹ Each army was attended by pages, grooms and other attendants "not included in the military establishment", but no estimate of their numbers can be attempted.⁴² We must confine ourselves to those in receipt of wages. Three fleets before 1380 carried companies of soldiers comparable in magnitude with the armies mentioned. These were the fleets of 1372, 1377 and 1378.

In September 1372 Edward III sailed out of Sandwich with a force of about 6,000 men-at-arms and archers. The captains included the Black Prince and the earls of Lancaster, Cambridge, Hereford, March, Salisbury, Suffolk and Warwick. Other captains were the lords Basset of Drayton, Brian, Despenser, Latimer and Zouche of Haringworth, the admirals, Sir William Nevill and Sir Philip Courtenay, and Sir Hugh Calveley and Sir Ralf Ferrers. There were many other retinues.⁴³ Foul weather brought the voyage to an end in early October, when the king had progressed no further than Winchelsea. Unfortunately the naval paymaster's account has not survived and we do not know the composition of Edward's navy. The fleet was clearly very large and may have approached 175-200 vessels with crews of a minimum strength of 5,000 sailors. All told the number serving may have been of the order of 12,000 to 13,000. This was the largest naval force of the later fourteenth century.

The earl of Buckingham's winter voyage of 1377-8 was also large and also suffered harshly from bad weather. After long delays it sailed in November and within a few days was caught in a terrific storm which sank several ships and drove the remainder, some of which needed to refit, back to port. The fleet sailed again during December and was in receipt of wages until late January. Twenty retinues were engaged with a total strength of approximately 4,000 men-at-arms and archers. The subordinate captains included the

⁴¹ J. W. Sherborne, "Indentured Retinues and English Expeditions to France, 1369-1380", *Eng. Hist. Rev.*, lxxix (1964), pp. 718-46.

⁴² Arundel's indenture of 1388 allowed for twelve unpaid "officers" for himself and one servant for each man-at-arms: P.R.O., E. 101/41/4.

⁴³ Sherborne, *loc. cit.*, p. 725, n. 5.

admirals, Sir Michael de la Pole and Sir Robert Hales, the earl of Devon, William lord Latimer, Sir Ralf Ferrers, Sir Robert Knolles and Sir Thomas Percy. The number of sailors manning the fleet's one hundred vessels cannot be precisely established, but more than 3,600 can be accounted for and the combined total of soldiers and sailors perhaps approached 8,000 men.⁴⁴

Buckingham's expedition was a belated response to Castilian enterprise during the previous summer. The council was determined that 1378 should see no repetition of such recent humiliation. To this end, as we have seen, new balingers were built to form part of a major force under the command of Lancaster. The fleet sailed in two parts: Richard, earl of Arundel, leaving port in April, was joined by Lancaster in July. There were nineteen retinues with a combined strength of more than 5,000 soldiers; at least 5,000 sailors manned the fleet of more than 150 vessels. Lancaster had a retinue of 1,000 men, equally divided between men-at-arms and archers, Arundel led 800 men, similarly divided, and other retinues included those of the earls of Buckingham, Cambridge, Stafford, Suffolk and Warwick. The expedition ended in September.⁴⁵

The fleets of 1372, 1377 and 1378 alone, therefore, had a total complement of about 30,000 soldiers and sailors. Other expeditions were on a smaller, though still impressive, scale. In 1373 the earl of Salisbury sailed with about 2,400 soldiers and at least 2,500 sailors;⁴⁶ in 1374 Sir William Nevill and Sir Philip Courtenay were at sea with 2,500 soldiers and over 2,000 sailors.⁴⁷ In addition there were substantial fleets in 1370 (Guy lord Brian), 1371 (the earl of Hereford, Guy lord Brian and Sir William Nevill) — each of these carried more than 1,000 soldiers and 1,000 sailors⁴⁸ — and in 1379 when the fleet of Sir Thomas Percy and Sir Hugh Calveley carried 1,750 soldiers and well over 1,500 sailors.⁴⁹ If the complements of these fleets are added to those of 1372, 1377 and 1378 approximately 46,000 soldiers

⁴⁴ P.R.O., E. 101/36/24, 26, 27, 29, 30, 31, 33; 38/18; E. 364/12, m. 3d; no. 13 mm. 10d, 13-13d; no. 14 m. 22d; no. 15 mm. 32d, 40; no. 16 m. 49d; no. 22 m. 22; E. 403/465, mm. 1-5.

⁴⁵ P.R.O., E. 101/36/32, 35; 37/24, 25, 27; 38/1, 14; E. 364/12 m. 1d, 4; no. 13 mm. 10-10d, 12; no. 15 mm. 38, 40; no. 16 mm. 47d, 50d; no. 18. mm. 63, 66d; E. 403/468 m. 4 ff.

⁴⁶ Brit. Mus. Add. MS. 37494, fols. 10, 14v, 23v-25v, 26v-28; P.R.O., E. 364/8 mm. 46, 552d; E. 403/449 m. 15.

⁴⁷ P.R.O., E. 101/33/10, 11, 13, 14-18; E. 364/8 m. 47d, 50; no. 9 mm. 56-64; no. 10 mm. 71d, 72d; no. 11; m. 82d; E. 403/451 m. 20 ff.; *Foedera*, iii (2), pp. 997, 1001. The naval paymaster's account for this voyage has not survived.

⁴⁸ P.R.O., E. 101/30/21, 29; 31/11, 23, 27; E. 364/5 m. 31d.

⁴⁹ P.R.O., E. 101/39/1, 42/21; E. 403/478 mm. 28, 31.

and sailors can be seen to have served at sea between 1369 and 1379. The inclusion of several minor exercises and of expeditions by squadrons of the Cinque Ports would involve at least a further 7,000 men.

In a separate category the crews of transport fleets must also be taken into account; they add substantially to the number of sailors "diverted to war-making". In 1369, for example, more than 5,000 sailors manned the ships which transported Lancaster's army to France,⁵⁰ and in 1375 at least 3,250 men were required for the Breton expedition.⁵¹ In 1371 the vessels which carried Lancaster and Sir Walter Hewitt to Gascony required the services of 2,700 sailors,⁵² more than 1,600 sailors were occupied in transport duties in 1373,⁵³ perhaps 2,500 were impressed for Sir John Arundel's attempted crossing to Brittany in 1379,⁵⁴ and 1,200 were needed in 1380.⁵⁵ No figures are available for Sir Robert Knolles's expedition of 1370. When all these fleets are taken into account the total number of sailors engaged in transport work was more than 16,000.

Thus the number of soldiers and sailors engaged in fighting and transport fleets between 1369 and 1380 was approximately 68,000 of which about 27,000 were soldiers. The last figure deserves emphasis because it reveals a remarkable conclusion: the number of soldiers engaged in naval warfare was not significantly different from the total engaged in field operations in France. Postan's proposition that naval forces were numerically "even more important than field forces and garrisons" is therefore amply borne out by the evidence cited for the years 1369 to 1380. It should, however, be noted that the duration of voyages was almost invariably shorter than that of military expeditions.

The year 1380 marked a turning-point in English military strategy. It saw the last English army fighting on French soil in the fourteenth century; it was also the prelude to a period of reduced activity on land and sea. On land the government pursued an opportunist policy of indirect attacks on France *via* Castile in 1381 (Cambridge had an army of almost 3,000 men)⁵⁶ and 1386, and *via* Flanders in 1383. There was also a major expedition (more than 12,000 troops)

⁵⁰ P.R.O., E. 101/36/14.

⁵¹ P.R.O., E. 101/33/31.

⁵² P.R.O., E. 101/30/29.

⁵³ Brit. Mus., Add. MS. 37494, fols. 17-20v.

⁵⁴ P.R.O., E. 101/38/30.

⁵⁵ P.R.O., E. 101/39/2.

⁵⁶ P.R.O., E. 101/39/17.

against Scotland, France's northern ally, in 1385.⁵⁷ In the years 1381-3, due to acute financial stringency, naval activity was small. It is also poorly documented. There were, however, substantial fleets at sea in 1385, 1387 and 1388. During the months of May to July 1385 Sir Thomas Percy and Sir Baldwin Raddington served with a fleet of thirty-one ships, six barges and six balingers; there were nearly 2,000 soldiers and over 2,000 sailors with them.⁵⁸ The fleets commanded by Richard, earl of Arundel in 1387 and 1388 were larger and indicate the vigorous naval policy of the Lords Appellant. Appointed admiral of the North and West on 10 December 1386 Arundel was at sea from mid-March to early July 1387 with a retinue of 2,381 soldiers — 1,091 men-at-arms, who included the earls of Devon and Nottingham, ten bannerets and eighty-nine knights, and 1,290 archers. His fleet consisted of thirty-one ships, nineteen barges and one balinger and was manned by 2,600 sailors; in addition there were a number of victualling ships.⁵⁹ In 1388 Arundel's retinue which again included Devon and Nottingham as well as twelve bannerets and 117 knights totalled nearly 3,500 men. They sailed with a fleet of fifty-three ships and nine barges manned by 2,900 sailors; thirty-five victualling ships also served. The fleet sailed in June and was dismissed in early September.⁶⁰ The addition of men serving in the squadrons commanded by Sir Philip Darcy and Sir Thomas Trivet in 1386,⁶¹ and by Sir Henry Percy in 1387,⁶² would bring the complements of the five forces which sailed in the years 1385 to 1388 to an aggregate of about 9,700 soldiers and approximately 9,100 sailors. The transport fleet of 1381 required 900 sailors and that of 1386 2,350 sailors. In addition allowance must be made for the naval forces of 1381 to 1383.⁶³

As the size of the armies of 1383 and 1386 is unknown and the naval evidence for certain years is incomplete, no satisfactory comparison of the manpower demands of army and navy between 1381 and 1389

⁵⁷ N. B. Lewis, "The Last Medieval Summons of the English Feudal Levy", *Eng. Hist. Rev.*, lxxiii (1958), pp. 2-26.

⁵⁸ P.R.O., E. 101/40/9; E. 364/20 m. 7.

⁵⁹ P.R.O., E. 101/40/35, 36; E. 403/515 m. 27.

⁶⁰ P.R.O., E. 101/40/40; 41/4; E. 403/519 m. 12; no. 521 mm. 6, 7.

⁶¹ Darcy and Trivet were at sea from early June to late August with a squadron of twelve vessels manned by 723 sailors and 500 soldiers: P.R.O., E. 364/24 m. 34; E. 101/40/21, 22.

⁶² Percy served with 800 soldiers for whom he was promised a fleet of 8 large ships, 8 barges, 4 balingers and 4 victuallers manned by 920 sailors; he was at sea in the months of August to October: P.R.O., E. 101/68/11 no. 253; E. 403/521 m. 25.

⁶³ E. 101/39/17; 40/19.

can be made. Certainly those of the navy did not exceed the army's in the way they had done up to 1380. There may in fact have been no significant numerical contrast between the two. Postan's generalization, therefore, does not hold true for the later period.

During the years we have considered the maritime communities of England made very considerable contributions to the war effort. Many hundreds of ships and tens of thousands of sailors were impressed for the king's service. Shipowners and sailors had no alternative but to acquiesce in the royal requirements, seeking only to persuade the crown to treat them with consideration and hoping that there might be profits from spoils. Shipowners, moreover, favoured strong naval policies, for government neglect of the seas exposed their trading ventures to serious hazards. Losses in ships and merchandise engaged in commerce proved more expensive than disruptions of trade and loss of freights caused by impressment. There can be no doubt that the war made a greater impact on those who earned their livings from the sea than it did upon the vast majority of Englishmen. In terms of diversion of manpower to hostilities the call made on a relatively small seafaring population was proportionately far heavier than was the call made by the army on the able-bodied men of town and countryside who were capable of bearing arms.

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