THE EVOLUTION OF DECORATIVE WORK ON ENGLISH MEN-OF-WAR FROM THE 16th TO THE 19th CENTURIES

A Thesis

by

ALISA MICHELE STEERE

Submitted to the Office of Graduate Studies of
Texas A&M University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

MASTER OF ARTS

May 2005

Major Subject: Anthropology

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Approved as to style and content by:

C. Wayne Smith (Chair of Committee)	James M. Rosenheim (Member)
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ABSTRACT

The Evolution of Decorative Work on

English Men-of-War from the 16th to the 19th Centuries. (May 2005)

Alisa Michele Steere, B.A., Texas A&M University

Chair of Advisory Committee: Dr. C. Wayne Smith

A mixture of shipbuilding, architecture, and art went into producing the wooden decorative work aboard ships of all nations from around the late 1500s until the advent of steam and the steel ship in the late 19th century. The leading humanists and artists in each country were called upon to draw up the iconographic plan for a ship's ornamentation and to ensure that the work was done according to the ruler's instructions. By looking through previous research, admiralty records, archaeological examples, and contemporary ship models, the progression of this maritime art form can be followed.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Thank you to all the members of my committee, Dr. Wayne Smith, Dr. Filipe Castro, and Dr. James Rosenheim, for all of your help with my research.

Thank you to my parents for all of your love, support, and encouragement – there is no way that I could have done it without the two of you! And to Eloise Eilert, without whom I would not have been able to make it through a few crazy days and missteps along the way – you are the best friend I could ever hope to have. And finally, to Glenn Grieco, for helping me both with my research and for keeping me grounded through this whole process – this would have been nearly impossible without your support along the way.

DEDICATION

To Samantha and Gizmo

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION: THE ORIGINS OF SHIP DECORATION

Although evidence of decoration aboard ships goes back more than two thousand years, nearly all of our knowledge of such decoration on early vessels comes from a limited assemblage of drawings, paintings, and models. Because many of the forms of decoration used aboard ships (and, indeed, the ships themselves) seldom survive in the archaeological record, the use of iconography is of paramount importance in the study of such vessels.

The artistic decoration of ships likely sprang from two main causes. One was the popularity of pageantry and the other was the inherent beauty of the ship herself. The design, structure, and materials used in shipbuilding easily lent themselves to embellishment with color, elaborate carving, and gold leaf enhancing an already beautiful shape. Religious fervor, expressed in carvings of saints and other biblical motifs; the love of allegory, which expressed itself in representations of gods and goddesses whose virtues would thus be incorporated into the ship herself; and superstition, giving rise to the use of decorative designs to placate the spirits of the sea were widely-used motives for decorating ships (Kemp 1966:41).

The earliest decoration on English ships took the form of painted sails and hulls. The painting of sails evolved from the simple striped sails of Norse ships into the heraldic mainsails of the 14th and 15th centuries. One of the ships depicted in the Bayeux

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This thesis follows the style of *Historical Archaeology*.

Tapestry (made after the 1066 Battle of Hastings to celebrate William the Conqueror's claim to the throne of England, and depicted in Figure 1) has a sail decorated with the Sun in Splendor, the emblem adopted a century later by Richard the Lionheart for use on his ships. Two centuries later, the sail was used to display armorial bearings. One of the illustrations in the Rous Roll in the British Museum shows the Earl of Warwick, Lord High Admiral of England, leading his fleet to sea. The entire mainsail of his ship bears the Neville coat of arms in blue, red, gold, and white, with a large pendant flying from the masthead. The ship herself is the contemporary ship with fore and after-castles decorated in the traditionally-arcaded manner (Kemp 1966:42).

Figure 1. Ships from the Bayeux Tapestry (after Lewis, 1999, *The Rhetoric of Power in the Bayeux Tapestry*)

Hulls were usually painted in horizontal stripes, one stripe to each strake, again depicted on the Bayeux Tapestry, although it is not possible to be certain that the exact colors are necessarily correct, as the queen and her ladies were limited by the colors of wools available for use in its creation. It was not until carvel construction superseded lapstrake

construction in shipbuilding that an entire body color was used for the hull. Even then, a painted frieze was typically used above the main body color along the upper wale (Kemp 1966:42).

Notable in Northern European ships for their decoration are the Viking longships, which functioned from roughly 800 to 1050 A.D. The majority of the evidence collected from these ships has been the result of archaeological investigation. The Oseberg ship, shown in Figure 2, is today located in Oslo, Norway. It is the most highly-decorated of these vessels, with animals and humans carved either in high relief or in the round. In addition, late Viking Age written sources attest proudly to these ships and their ornaments. Especially common on these ships, according to the sources, were a dragon's head on the stempost, sometimes with a corresponding tail or another head, placed on the sternpost. Evidence from both the Viking sagas and archeological investigation show that painting, relief carving, and decorative ironwork were also used to embellish these ships (Christensen 1966:13).

Figure 2. Detail of the Bow of the Oseberg Viking Ship (After Christensen 1966:15)

Danish Viking raids into England slowed in the late 10th and early 11th centuries. As these raids ceased and fighting was not the primary purpose of seagoing vessels, the fighting longship was superseded by a new design, allowing for a fuller hull which could more easily accommodate cargo. In England, specialized fighting ships also fell out of use because this new design allowed for a vessel that could serve both as a cargo vessel and as a war vessel. This new type of vessel would eventually evolve into the ship which, though modified through the centuries and not reaching its peak until roughly the late 16th century, would afford England her naval supremacy (Archibald 1968:2-3).

The bows of the majority of ships in the early 15th century were typically decorated with a small coat-of-arms or tapering animal. As ships became larger and more intricate, ornamentation on those owned by monarchs or the medieval equivalent of corporations received more profuse decoration. The largest ships and those which were held in high esteem (such as flagships, considered to embody all the elegance of the monarch and country) had more extensive decoration. Newer shipbuilding methods enabled more lavish ornamentation as the vessels became not only larger, but also far more intricate during through the 15th century. As the prow and beakhead developed throughout the 15th and 16th centuries, there were a number of new shipboard locations for ornamentation. Signs and symbols on the bow and stern gave way to a new genre of embellishment developed when the high forecastles and aftercastles came into fashion with their Gothic pillars, arches, and heraldic shields. The latter were a relic of shields of soldiers being hung over the railings of the castles, as the Vikings had hung theirs on the sides of their ships. It has been suggested that the Crusades may have contributed to the more elaborate decoration of warships, due to the fact that when fighting among so many nations was occurring, it was important to be able to quickly distinguish friend from foe (Hanson 1968:113).

By the beginning of the 16th century decoration was in the form of carved badges or sculpted figures (possibly depicting a saintly subject), and a profuse number of flags and banners or streamers. A small head on the end of a post at the extreme end of the forward fighting platform and shield decoration around both the forward and after platforms was the general scheme of ornamentation (Weightman 1966:193).

It was in the second half of the 16th century that decorative art in shipbuilding began to flourish, providing large warships with painted or carved figures and ornaments. Ornamentation played a particularly notable role in the 16th and 17th centuries and the beginning of the 18th century, which in the history of art corresponds to the Renaissance, Baroque, Rococo, and Neo-Classical periods. Large warships were decorated in ways that were thought to emphasize the military, political, and ancestral power of the ruling monarch and the country, as these ships were often the only direct manifestation of a country seen by its enemies. The leading intellectuals and artists in each country were called upon to draw up the iconographic plan for a ship's ornamentation and to ensure that the work was done according to the ruler's instructions. This was an important branch of artistic activity in seafaring countries, and wood-carving in shipbuilding at the time, although an important aspect of art as a whole, is often overlooked.

CHAPTER II

THE 16th CENTURY

ORNAMENTATION OVERVIEW

In the 16th century, ship ornamentation was primarily in the form of paint. In addition, flags, pendants, and immensely long streamers were a natural form of decoration in the 16th century that lasted well into the 18th century. These flags and banners denoted the rank and importance of the principal person(s) on board the ship; were intended to impress enemies and foreigners; and on occasion were used to express festivity and gaiety. The bulwarks and tops of warships were also decorated, with top armings (the cloth around the tops) available either plain or colored. Heraldically painted shields provided protection for the sailors by being hung along the rail, with spaces left between them to accommodate the muzzles of the ships' guns. By the end of the 16th century decorated cloth was used to replace the shields (Howard 1979:61).

Figure 3, an illustration from the Anthony Roll, of the *Henry Grace a Dieu* (1514), shows her flying at least twenty flags and nine pendants or streamers (Kemp 1966:42). The figure, drawn and colored by a master shipwright (believed to be Matthew Baker) who began his apprenticeship under Henry VIII and survived until the reign of James I, are both of the highest authority and are the earliest detailed representations of the hulls of ships which have survived (Laughton 2001:11). The streamers carried by these ships were as enormous as they appear in the drawings. The streamer flown from the main mast of the *Henry Grace a Dieu* was 51 yards long and was supplied by the

king's painter, John Brown. All of the flags bore the cross of St. George at the hoist, with the fly horizontally divided between green and white, the preferred colors of the Tudors. The cross of St. George was the principal national emblem of England at this time, used in various combinations on flags and standards both at sea and on land, and it has been speculated that it may have been a predecessor of the union jack (invented in 1606), which became the prime characteristic of royal ships (Wilson 2000:28).

The drawing shows the ship as being devoid of ornamentation, save for the actual architecture of the ship herself, the afore-mentioned pennant on the bowsprit, and the paint work. The billing accounts for her construction record the use of red and white lead, yellow ochre, vermilion, crimson lake (dark red), brown and verdigris (bluish-green), and varnish. The painting from the Anthony Roll shows the diagonal stripes on the hull in a dull red, but above the main wale, the rest of the hull is light brown, the color of the wood. Other ships in the Roll are depicted similarly, and they are shown as a dark brown below the waterline, representing the color of the tar and pitch used to coat the bottoms of the ships. At the end of her bowsprit, the *Henry Grace a Dieu* carried a crowned orb on a small spritmast (Howard 1979:59-61). Throughout the Roll, the paint on these ships shows that the style of painted decoration was typically a modest frieze of herring-bone or diagonal patterning with badges on some along the counter and rails. The queen's ships were more elaborately painted, with geometric patterns, strap ornaments, and the arcading in contrasting bright colors (Laughton 2001:11).

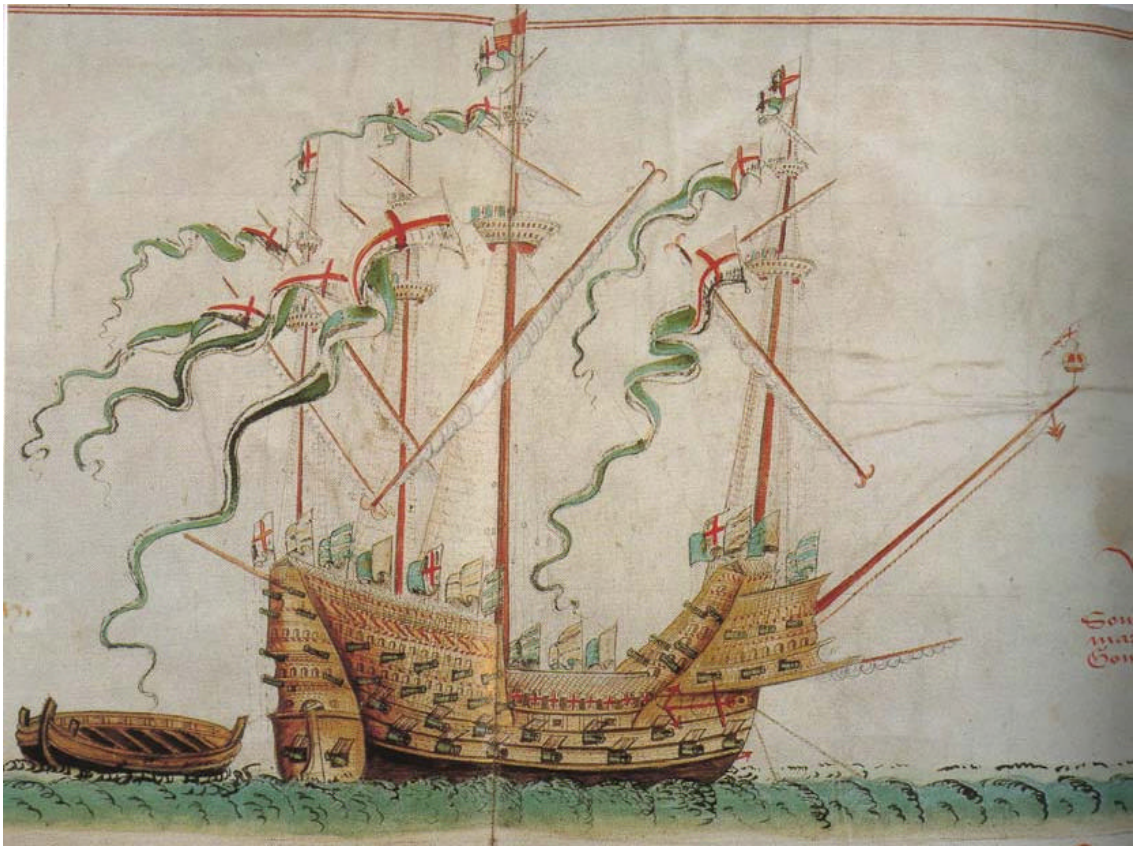


Figure 3. ***Henry Grace a Dieu*** **(after Knighton and Loades 2000:40)**

Figure 4, a painting depicting Henry VIII embarking at Dover in 1520, shows the upper parts of the forecastles and after-castles decorated with heraldic shields. The stern and the after bulkhead of the forecastle are painted with the coat-of-arms of England (Hanson 1968:113).

Figure 4. The Embarkation of Henry VIII for France (after Howard 1979:54)

FIGUREHEADS IN THE 16th CENTURY

The head, a feature important in ships for the placement of the figurehead, came into existence during the reign of Henry VIII. The forward edge of the forecastle receded and eventually became the beakhead bulkhead. During this time, the beakhead became more developed, providing a working area below the bowsprit. As this area developed, it provided more area within which to integrate the figurehead.

The beakhead was placed in a near-horizontal position until close to the end of the 17th century, although there were developments in its construction which necessitated restructuring the position of the figurehead. Initially, there were no cheeks associated with the head, and when cheeks were introduced in the late 16th century, they were placed to either form part of the head itself or were hidden beneath the rails. The introduction of these cheeks is important in understanding the evolution of the figurehead, as they affected its position and because the trailboard (which lay between the cheeks in later vessels) was also carved (Laughton, 2001:66-67).

Before the cheeks were introduced, the figurehead was placed at the fore end of the head itself, against the bracket where the rails terminated. The knee eventually was made deeper, providing room for the figurehead between the single cheek and the lowest rail, causing the figure to be placed under the head rather than in front of it. The same method was utilized when a second cheek was added, with the figure being placed between the cheeks. This caused the forward end of the main rail to be significantly

above the figure, and often ended in a spiral with some sort of round carving, such as a rosette or a crown, at its end (Laughton 2001:67). The heads of ships with both treatments are shown in Figures 5a and 5b.

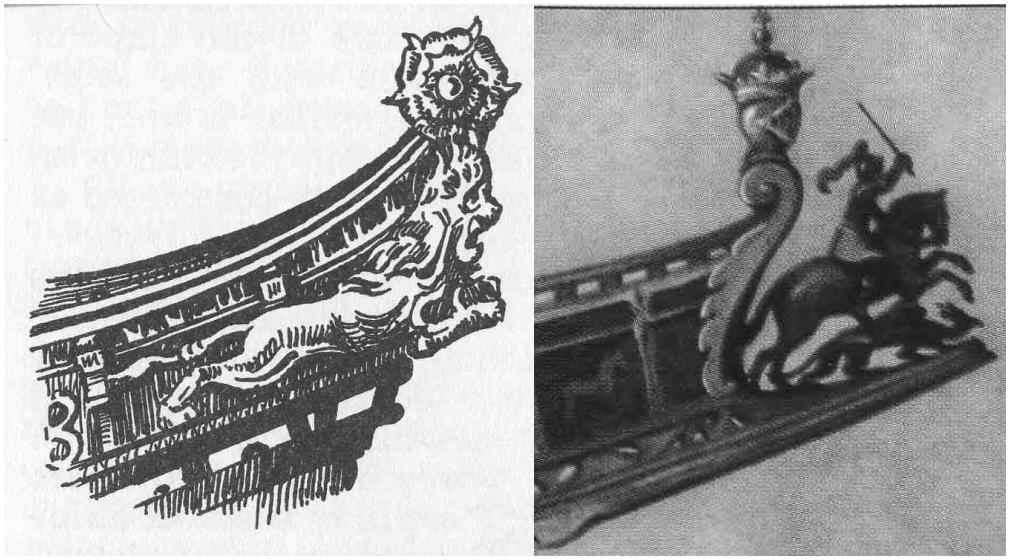


Figure 5. (a) Figurehead Prior to the Introduction of Cheeks and (b) After the Use of Two Cheeks (after Laughton 2001:Plate 2)

An alternative method of fitting the figure was sometimes used, wherein the knee of the head was continued several feet beyond the fore end of the rails, forming a small platform for the figure to be placed upon. This was a common configuration during the Stuart period (1603-1714), and was a successful method when fitting ships with group figureheads. The *Phoenix* (built in 1613), with her figurehead St. George slaying the dragon (depicted in Figure 6), was placed in such a position (Laughton 2001:67).

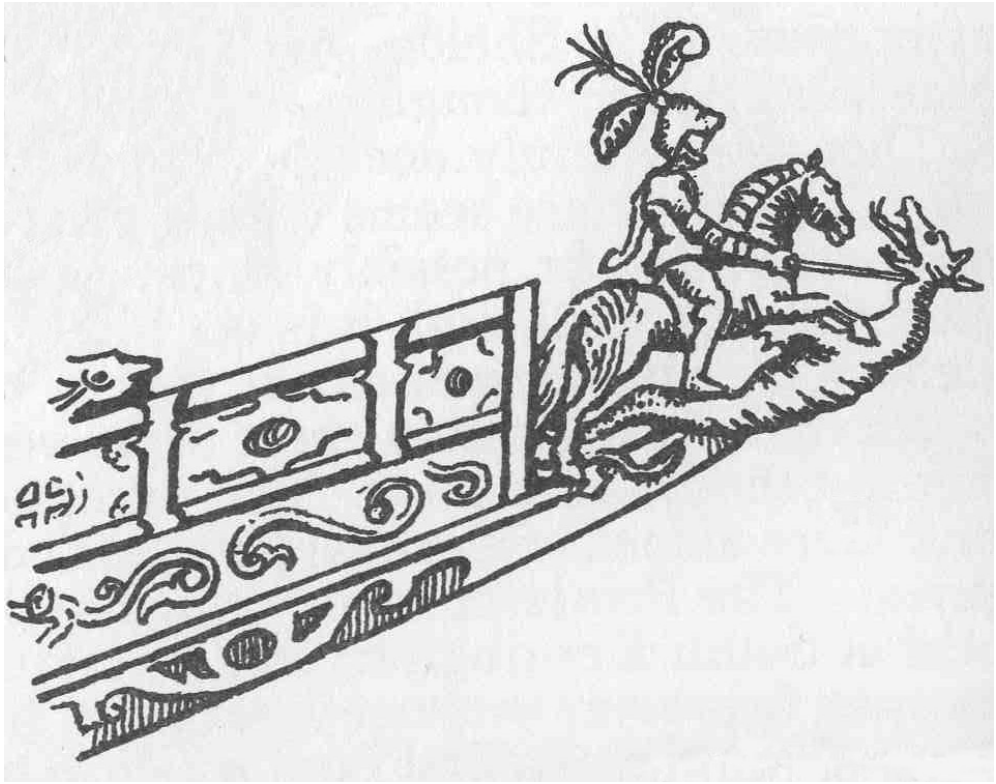


Figure 6. Figurehead of the *Phoenix* (1613) (after Laughton 2001:72)

As the Elizabethan era neared its end, the fashion turned toward more carving, painting, and gilding (all of which truly flourished in the 17th century when the English took up the Baroque style). All warships were graced with figureheads, but up to at least the middle of the century, they were small and mounted on a spur at the fore end of the forestage. In the second half of the century the figurehead had become an integral part of the end of the beak due to the development of the beakhead bulkhead, and judging from the few examples known, often had some allegorical reference to the name of the ship (Howard 1979:61).

Both lions and dragons had been popular in English heraldry for centuries. Of the 13 large English warships that were afloat at the beginning of the 16th century, five had dragons as figureheads, five had lions, and three had other animals (Hansen and Hansen 1991:17). The royal arms was painted or carved on the stern, a method which was more or less universal throughout Europe at the time. The emphasis of dragons and lions as figureheads during Elizabeth's reign is indicative of the progression into the 17th century.

Toward the end of the 16th century the dragon began to disappear as a figurehead as the construction of the head progressed. The dragon had initially been popular not only for the heraldry associated with it as a symbol, but also for the ease with which it could be integrated into the head of the ship. The three-masted galleons with the triangular forecastle projecting over the prow necessitated a new type of figurehead was born. The beam projecting forward over the prow from the middle of the foremost deck beam, on which the forecastle rested in the carracks, and whose upper end generally formed the dragon's head, was now more or less replaced by two beams set further to each side of the prow and extending far forward. They carried the basket-like, pointed figurehead framework. Up front, at the tip of the lower bowsprit beam, there now stood the figurehead, usually life-sized (Hansen and Hansen 1991:17).

The medieval dragon, symbol of power and fighting spirit that had stood atop the stem post, became very uncommon and was finally replaced by the lion. At the end of the 16th century, the lion began to play a leading role in heraldry, art, and architecture which continued throughout the entire Renaissance and Baroque eras (Hansen and Hansen 1991:17). The dragon was seen less and less, and by about 1750 the lion was the dominant figurehead on English warships, as well as the warships of most other sea powers in Europe.

PAINTWORK IN THE 16th CENTURY

Ships of Queen Elizabeth I (1558-1603) were painted in the colors of the Tudors: green, white, red, yellow, and blue in elaborate designs with geometric patterns and strap ornaments (Laughton 2001:11). The *Bonaventure*'s upperworks were black and white, while the *Revenge* and *Scout* were painted green and white. Other colors used on Elizabethan ships (though not all necessarily used outside) were vermilion, russet, bice (bluish-green), brown, verdigris, green, and aneral (ashen grey).

Some of the contemporary plans show the first appearance of a new decorative motif, scrollwork based on plant tendrils (see the quarterdeck of Figure 7). Although the idea did not catch on at the time it foretold the coming of the baroque decoration in the next century. As the 16th century closed, the first definite signs of this new extravagant style began to appear (Howard 1979:61).

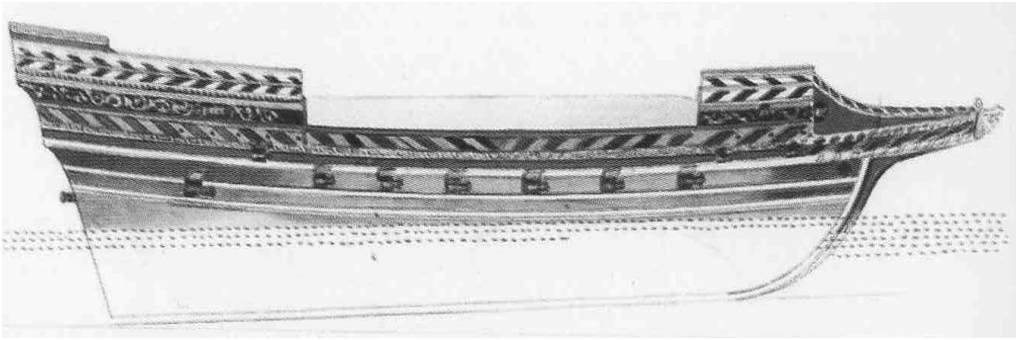


Figure 7. Longitudinal Profile of Elizabethan-Period Vessel Depicting Paintwork (after Laughton 2001:Plate1)

CHAPTER III

THE 17th CENTURY

The beginning of the 17th century marked the beginning of a new phase both in naval architecture and in decoration. The creation of great national navies led to a scale of unprecedented shipbuilding, creating a major industry in England, as well as other northern European countries. Construction became more technical in the case of major ships of war, and kings and governments became directly interested in the activities of the dockyards rather than continuing to rely on the words of financiers and administrators. As sea battles developed into artillery duels, it warships were divided into classes, known as Rates, according to their tonnage and number of guns. Only the large ships of the line of the First to Third Rates were used in the actual battle line (hence their name), while ships of the Fourth to Sixth Rates served as escorts to merchant convoys in the colonies. Because the ships their countries produced were meant to evoke an indelible image of power and majesty, monarchs became more concerned with producing ships that they felt were indicative of their rule. There was a corresponding expansion of seaborne trade, resulting from the discovery of new lands and trade routes in the 16th century. The size of ships increased, with larger ships rigged with four masts (although the Bonaventure mizzen was soon discarded) and the three-masted full-rigged ship became the standard.

Along with these construction changes, there was also a notable change in decoration. Monarchies and republics alike adopted the baroque style, and the painted and heraldic decoration of Tudor ships gave way to an explosion of carving and gilding, mainly concentrated on the stern, but spreading also along the broadside and bulkheads, and flowering in grandiose figureheads with elaborate friezes along the sides of the beak (Norton 1976:47).

In many countries, the general belief was that the appearance of a warship reflected the dignity and importance of the monarch, and the Stuart kings subscribed to this opinion so fully that by the end of the 1660s nearly every part of the hull above the water was painted, gilded, or carved (and sometimes received all three treatments). Not only the stern and its associated galleries and the head, but all the minor inboard and outboard works such as belfry, bulkheads, rails, upper gunports, and even hawseholes were decorated in this lavish manner (Howard 1979:114).

GUNPORTS IN THE 17th CENTURY

The great growth of ship ornamentation which began very late in the 16th century soon extended itself to the ports, and from the reign of James I, those of the upper deck and above began to be surrounded by carvings. The earliest documented instances of carved gunports were aboard the *Phoenix* of 1612, which had in her forecastle circular chase ports surrounded by two intertwined snakes; and the *Constant Reformation* of 1618, which carried two arched wreath ports per side on the half-deck (all other ports

were plain aboard the ship). The *Prince Royal* of 1610 is said to have carried lionheads for its round ports, but no representation of these has yet been found (Laughton 2001: 221).

Gunports, either circular, square, or square with rounded corners, often featured carved wreaths finished off by being gilded or painted in gold. The square port wreath was common in the 1640s and 1650s, and most ships of the Civil War and Commonwealth period acquired a floral decoration around the edges of each of the square gunports on the upper deck, forecastle, and quarterdeck. At this time, the ports in the waist usually carried no lids, as they were often small and circular, allowing only room for the gun to project, with little space for elevation or traversing – accordingly, they were surrounded by a small circular wreath on many ships. This system of decoration had some disadvantages: the small circular gunports were probably inconvenient in action; and the circular wreaths, in the middle of a line of square ones, broke up the symmetry of the design. Around 1660 there was a trend of replacing the old port wreaths, both the full-sized square ones and the small circular ones, with large circular wreaths, which were actually larger than the ports themselves, and only came into contact with the ports at their corners, if at all. Soon they were being fitted on all new ships, and the old square ports fell into total eclipse (Lavery 1983:53).

The term ‘wreath’ implies a floral design, which was the most common motif. Occasionally, the design consisted of a curved figure on each side, with other carvings joining them above and below. Some ships had two different designs, alternating along the length. On larger ships the bulkheads of the quarterdeck, poop and forecastle were also decorated with carvings, though on two-deckers they seem to have been much simpler, with only plain wood carving, at least until 1677. The forward bulkhead, aft of the beakhead, was particularly elaborate, especially on First Rates, the largest and most expensive warships. It usually had a row of vertical figures, with gilded figures between, often over the surfaces of the gunports (Lavery 1983:53). Figure 8 depicts the wreath types used in 17th century English warships.

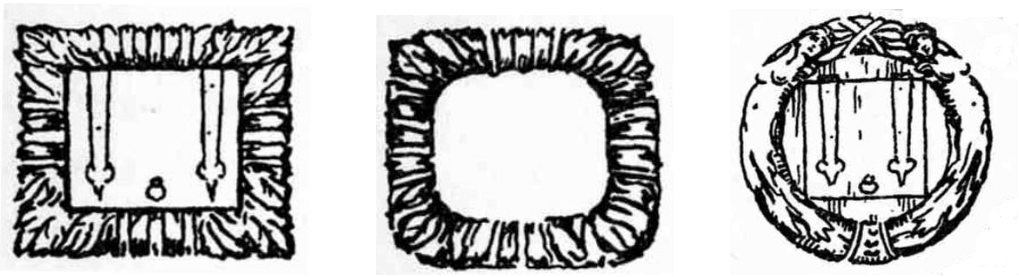


Figure 8. English 17th Century Wreath Ports (after Laughton 2001:222)

In addition to the evolution in the design of gunports aboard English men-of-war, the fastenings holding the gunports to the ship also continued to change throughout the 17th century. The three most common types in the 16th century and the dates of which they are indicative are shown in Figure 9.

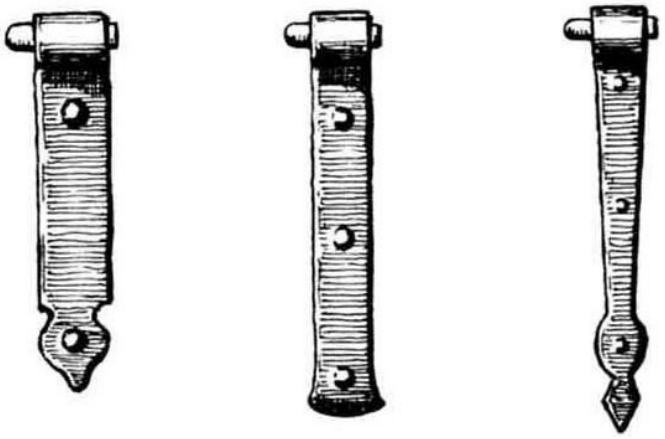


Figure 9. Port Lid Hinges from 17th Century Men-of-War (after Franklin 1989:31)

Occasionally the upper gunports had lion marks around them, placed so that when fired, the shot came forth from the lion's mouth (Howard 1979:115). Catheads and their brackets were also decorated (see Figure 10), early in the century only on the outer end, usually in the form of a lion's mask. The sides of the cathead were painted and later the brackets were carved, sometimes quite elaborately, with whole figures of lions or, later in the century, with human figures in the classical style underneath the catheads (Howard 1979:118).

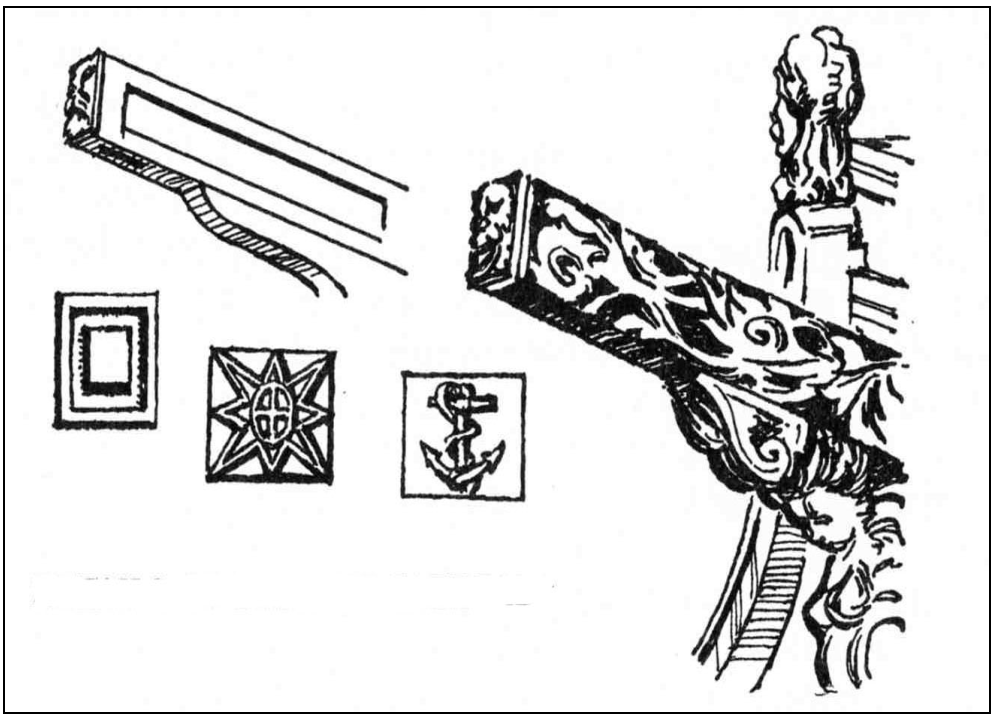


Figure 10. Details of English Catheads (after Laughton 2001:58)

QUARTER GALLERIES AND STERN IN THE 17th CENTURY

The quarter galleries and sterns of English men-of-war in the 17th century were the most extensively and ornately-decorated portions of the ship, and they also underwent more change during the century than the other areas. Elaboration in décor began early in the century and by the end of the century had developed into rows of windows separated by galleries, all decorated with profuse carving (Howard 1979: 118).

Shipwrights were able to mimic the architectural details of palaces, cathedrals and public buildings on shore when applying decoration to the stern. The stern windows afforded an opportunity for architectural styling when designing the features to be incorporated therein (Laughton 2001:131). The stern itself was a relatively flat surface, above the counters, with a curved taffrail at the top. Early in the 17th century, it was very narrow above the taffrail, but it began to widen in the 1640s, partly due to new design methods. Before 1640 the windows typically had plain vertical supports between them, with arches above, very similar to a great house or public building (Laughton 2001:131). From early in the century, a row of windows was fitted across the stern at the level of the upper deck (and also across the middle deck on three-deckers) for the convenience of the officers, who were traditionally accommodated there (Lavery 1983:51).

The taffrail was greatly reduced by around 1670 with the introduction of the quarter-deck windows and open galleries, necessitating a decrease in the width of the taffrail. At this time, the use of royal arms carved into the taffrails themselves decreased both in size and usage, and as the taffrail progressively narrowed, the room for taffrail carvings dwindled until the beginning of the 18th century they were rarely used (Laughton 2001:131).

Decoration was extended down through the counters, which had similar carved figures dividing them into segments. The spaces between figures were decorated with paintings or bas-relief carvings, usually of heraldic, classical, or astrological figures. Even when England was under Puritanical rule, there is no sign of any attempt to introduce a religious theme to these figures. The horizontal subdivision of the stern was achieved by comparatively simple mouldings, which were much more plain than the carved figures. This gave the stern a vertical emphasis, characteristic of the third quarter of the 17th century (Lavery 1983:51).

Taffrails during the early Stuart days were often plain, with only a simple rail preventing the occupants of the quarterdeck from falling overboard. The *Sovereign of the Seas* had a slightly more elaborate version, which seems to have drawn attention to the possibilities available for decoration, as the taffrail became complicated over the few years after her launch. By 1660 the taffrail was formed by a complex series of carvings which completely obscured the rail on which it was based. These carvings typically were composed of carved figures such as serpents, and other various emblems (Lavery 1983:51). The taffrail on the *Sovereign of the Seas* declared her identity, as it was carved with the King's arms, making them indicative of her name (Laughton 2001:131).

In the early 1640s the edges of the stern, which formed corners with the sides of the hull, gained light carved figures, which became larger in the 1660s. There were typically two on each corner: one on the flat of the stern itself; the other, slightly larger, around the corner on the extremity of the sides of the hull. Below the counters, the stern decorations were less elaborate. In the 1660s there was usually a painting or carving of a seated figure in classical dress, with light abstract carvings. The rudder head was usually carved, most commonly with the head of a lion (Lavery 1983:51-52).

Quarter galleries became a prominent feature of ships in the mid-17th century, and there was a high degree of latitude in the fitting of these galleries. These galleries originated with the open balconies Elizabethan galleons had carried on their sterns and quarters in the early 16th century. By the beginning of the 17th century they were often covered over, sometimes flanked with turrets, which may have originally been intended to serve as a shelter for musketeers, but they soon became devoted entirely to the comfort of officers. The turrets become larger in the 1630s, and there was often a single large turret with a short open gallery (Lavery 1983:52). Laughton (2001:165-166) has divided their form into four main types: the flat gallery, the five-sided gallery, the bottle gallery, and the half-bottle, all of which are discussed in the following paragraphs.

The Flat Gallery: In the first type could be fitted with open deck, as was done in the *Constant Reformation* of 1618 or with two decks, as in the *Sovereign of the Seas* of 1637 (depicted in Figure 11). The *Sovereign of the Seas* (discussed further later in this chapter) had three turrets which were joined together and were of approximately equal height. The turrets were dominated by large windows on both the lower and middle deck. Up to the level of the upper deck they formed virtually a single structure, but above that each had a separate curved roof, giving each the appearance of a lantern. The old open gallery remained forward of the main structure, although this design was seldom used in the vast majority of later ships (Lavery 1983:52). Earlier examples show the use of a lean-to roof (which went out of fashion in England in about 1640) while later examples show the roof finished with three domes or turrets of nearly equal size (Laughton 2001:165).

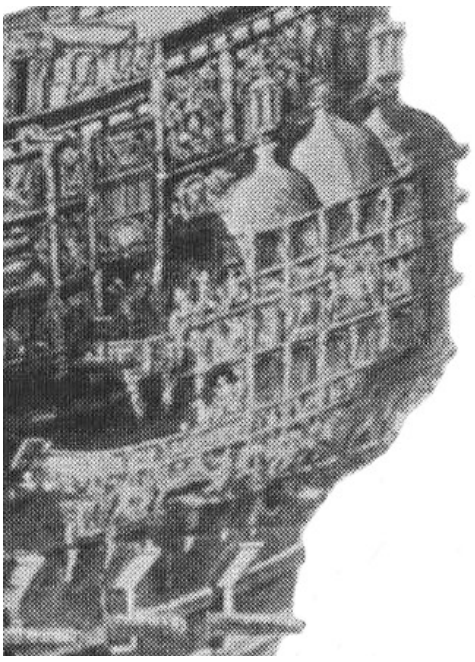


Figure 11. 17th Century Stern - Flat Gallery Type (after Laughton 2001:Plate 9)

The Five-Sided Gallery: The three-part arrangement of the turrets composing the quarter gallery remained fairly constant over the next thirty years, though it was altered to incorporate some important changes, which are indicative of the second type of gallery, the five-sided gallery. The center dome become larger, predominating over the other two smaller domes. The curves of the dome became large, giving a much more ornate impression, in contrast to the very angular galleries of the *Sovereign of the Seas*.

In the Commonwealth Period (1653-1660) this gallery became the predominant type, consisting of the central portion projected in a bay further outboard than the wings (as in Figure 12). The wings were relatively small, and seen from an angle, one was normally hidden by the central bay which jutted out further from the hull than the wing. Earlier ships with this type of gallery were sometimes equipped with the triple dome finishing (the lateral domes being much smaller), but in later ships, the wings ended above a small shelf which commonly supported an ornament such as an animal or a shell (Laughton 2001:165).

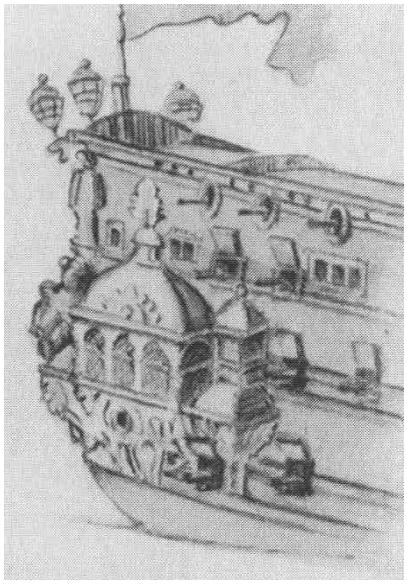


Figure 12. 17th Century Stern - Five-Sided Gallery Type (after Laughton 2001:Plate 46)

The Bottle Gallery: By 1670 the two outside domes had diminished in size on some ships, causing the gallery to assumed the 'bottle' form that became characteristic during the late 17th century and is indicative of quarter gallery type 3 (depicted in Figure 13). At the level of the windows the three parts remained virtually indistinguishable: the windows followed the pattern of those on the stern, and in many cases appearing to be a single row, though other ships accentuated those under the center dome. Above the three pointed domes were more carvings, commonly a lion on one of the smaller domes with a unicorn on the other, both acting as heraldic bearers to a royal emblem at the top of the largest one. Occasionally this was replaced by a different symbol, as in the *Prince* of 1670, which had the three feathers of the Prince of Wales at the top of a very large central dome. Many ships had a recess on the side of the central dome, with a carved figure placed within it (Lavery183:52).

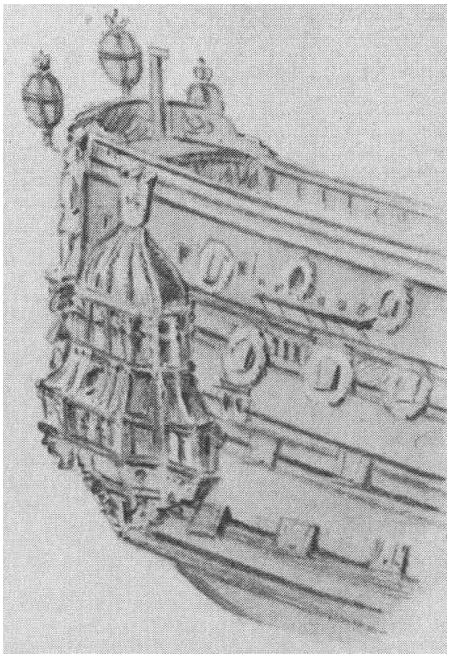


Figure 13. 17th Century Stern - Bottle Gallery Type (after Laughton 2001:Plate 46)

The Half-Bottle Gallery: Each of the three previous gallery types (flat, five-sided, and bottle) represented the progressive shortening of the gallery both fore and aft. The limit of this development was reached when the after edge of the galleries on all decks reached to the aft side of the fashion piece (see Figure 14). The upper part of the quarter gallery had once been purely decorative, but now it was common to make the quarterdeck cabin more spacious to accommodate officers, and in some of the ships of the 1677 building program there is a true quarter gallery at this level. By the 1690s it was common to have a window in the upper part of the gallery, and in some ships the gallery was beginning to lean against the flat of the stern, affording a little more room for the occupants (Lavery 1983:58).

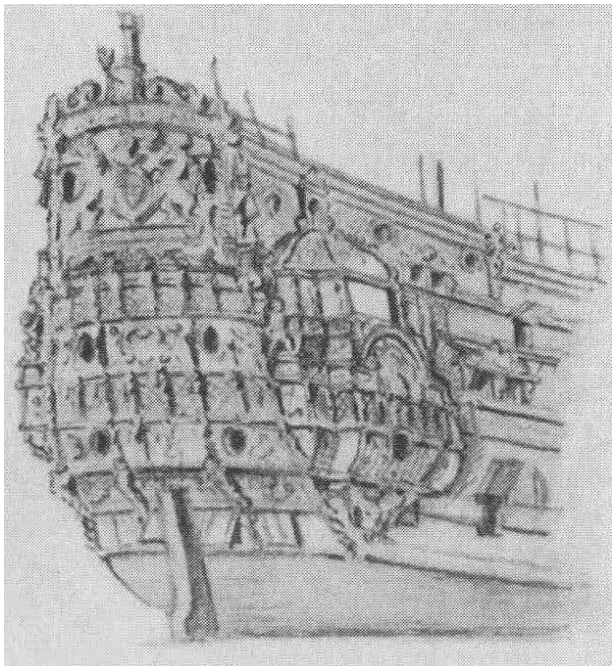


Figure 14. 17th Century Stern - Half-Bottle Gallery Type (after Laughton 2001:Plate 46)

Below the window level, the sides and ends of the quarter galleries angled inward, coming to an end a few feet below the windows. The surfaces of this area were divided into panels by carved figures, and the panels themselves were filled with paintings or bas-relief carvings. Below this, on the side of the hull itself, was another carving, commonly of a winged figure. At the very top of the stern, above the taffrail, were placed three stern lanterns which were spherical in shape (Lavery 1983:52).

The Naval Defence Act of 1676 required ships to be constructed with a tier of stern windows on the quarter-deck, greatly decreasing the depth of the taffrail. If the quarter figures remained in their old position they could merely serve as pillars or brackets for the ends of the taffrail, and at this time they were converted to this use. As the vertical space available for them was less than previous, the practice seems to have changed to making them seated instead of standing figures, so that they rose only to the lower edge of the taffrail. The earliest ship which shows this is the *St. Michael* of 1669 (depicted in Figure 15), which has a pair of figures seated on the arches which lead through from her stern to her quarter galleries (Laughton 2001:134-135).

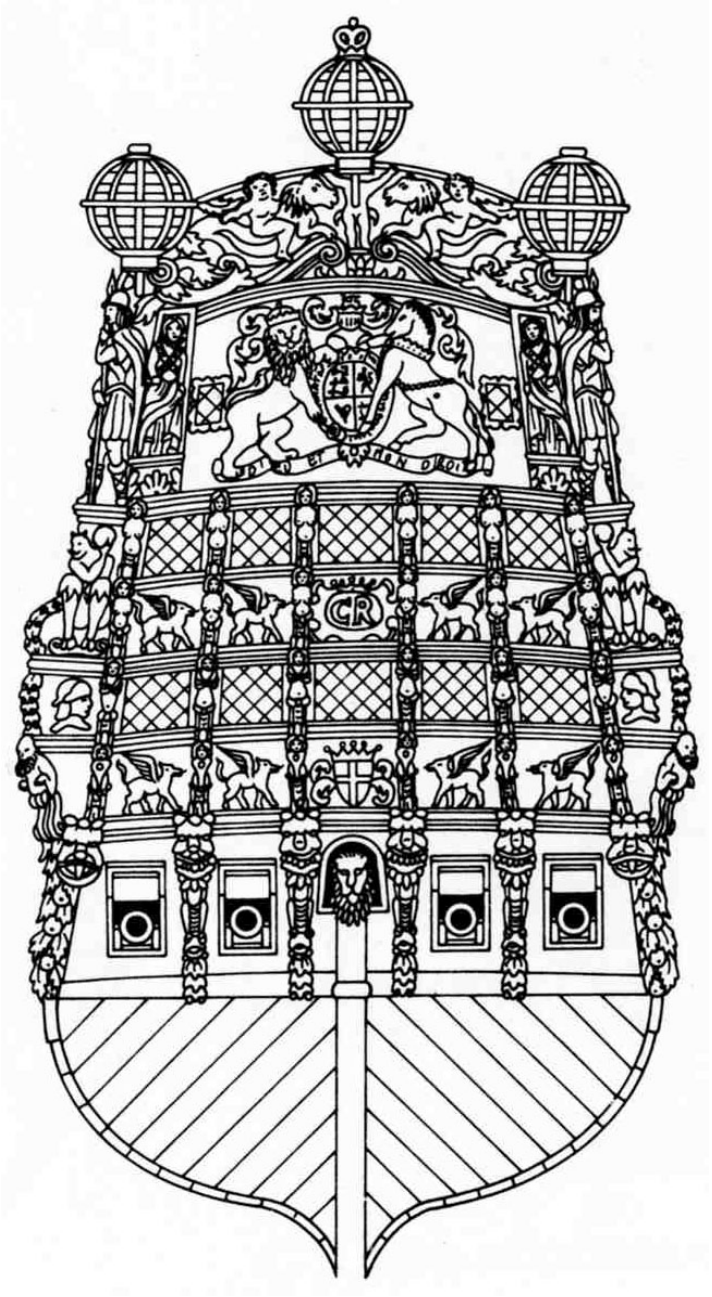


Figure 15. The Stern of the St. Michael (1669) (after zu Mondfeld 1989:107)

Many previous ships were not fitted with stern galleries, but about half of the 1677 ships carried them in one form or another: most had projecting galleries, which jutted out directly from the flat of the stem; others had recessed galleries, in which the row of stern windows was omitted and a screen bulkhead placed a few feet forward, to allow a kind of covered balcony; yet others had a combination of the two, giving a rather wider gallery. Some of the two-deckers had two galleries, one on the quarterdeck and one on the upper deck. There was no typical pattern for arranging the galleries at this point in time, and like many other details, the placement of the galleries appears to have been left to the individual shipwright (Lavery 1983:56).

The stern galleries considerably altered the old system of decoration, because over time they destroyed the vertical emphasis of the stern. It became common to fit a row of stern windows on the quarterdeck cabin, and this, even if it was not combined with a gallery, meant that the royal coat of arms, which had once dominated the stern, became much smaller and was situated between the quarterdeck and the upperdeck windows. Initially there was some attempt to retain the old vertical emphasis, with lines of carved figures running upwards despite the interruptions of galleries and windows. By the end of the century these had been replaced by heavily carved friezes which usually had a horizontal emphasis (Lavery 1983:56-58).

During the reign of William III (1689-1702) the stern figures were cut in the round, rather than cut in high relief. They were seated or kneeling on the end of the upper quarter gallery where it met the stern, and as they did not rise to the lower edge of the taffrail in that position, a second figure on each side was added above them (see Figure 16). This figure rose to the full height of the taffrail and, therefore, ceased to serve as a bracket, becoming a mere ornament.

Toward the end of William III's reign (1695-1702) the regular practice was to open a way through from the stern gallery to the quarter gallery, and as the lower quarter piece figure was in the way, the remedy was to make the figure seated, facing to the broadside, so that an arch would be formed under its knees (see Figure 17). The first known example of this method is seen in the *Britannia* of 1682. The idea of the quarter piece belonging to the taffrail was clearly forgotten by this point, and in ships of about 1700 the figures reached down to the level of the upper deck, usually two to a side in a three-deck (one to each deck) and one to a side in a two-decker (Laughton 2001:135).

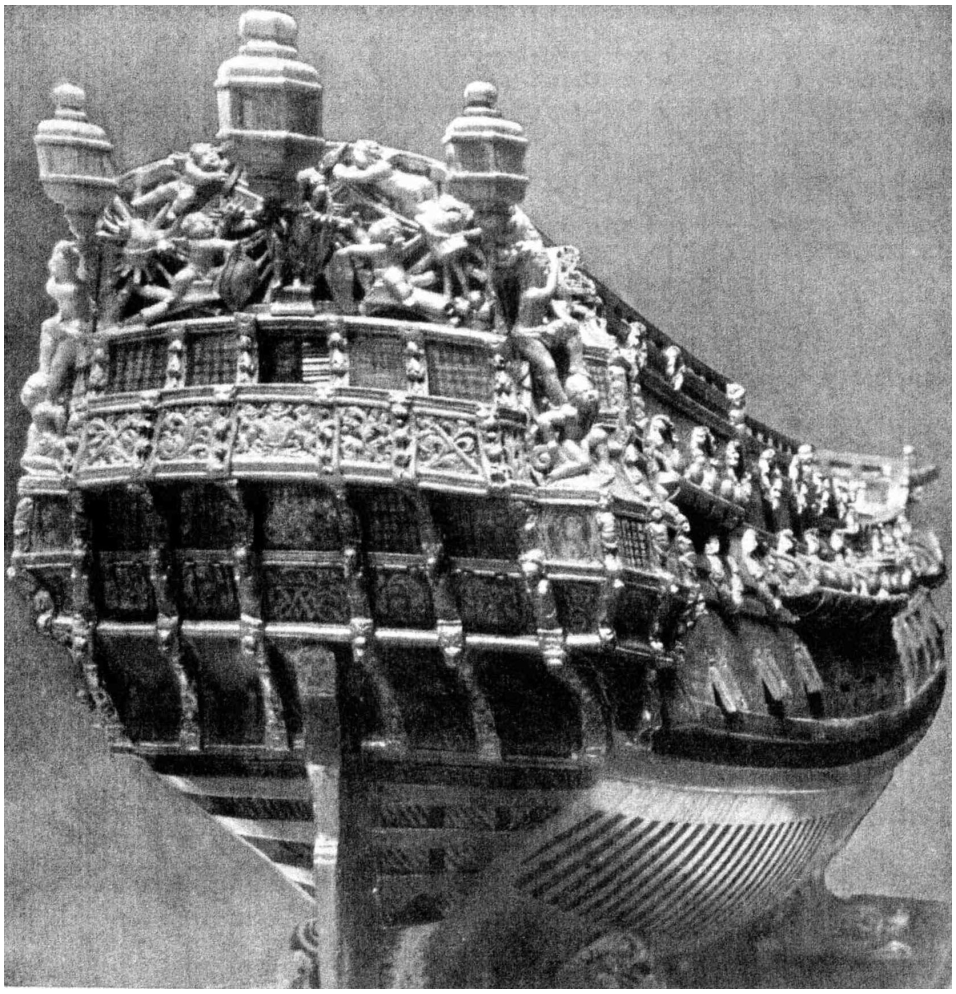


Figure 16. Stern of an English 80-Gun Ship (Circa 1695)
(after Nance 2000:Plate 44)

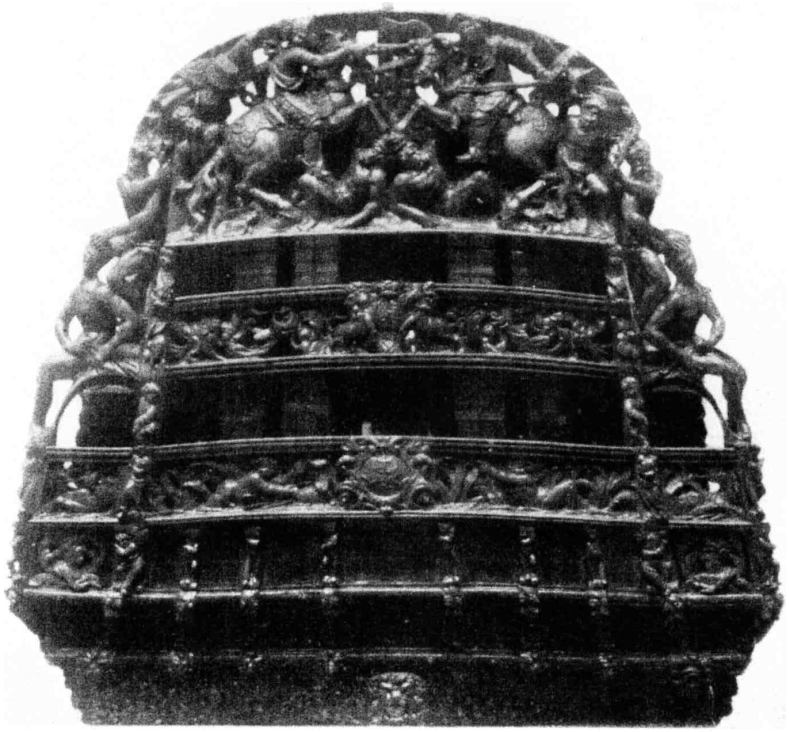


Figure 17. Stern Details of *Britannia* (circa 1700)
(after Nance 2000:Plate 57)

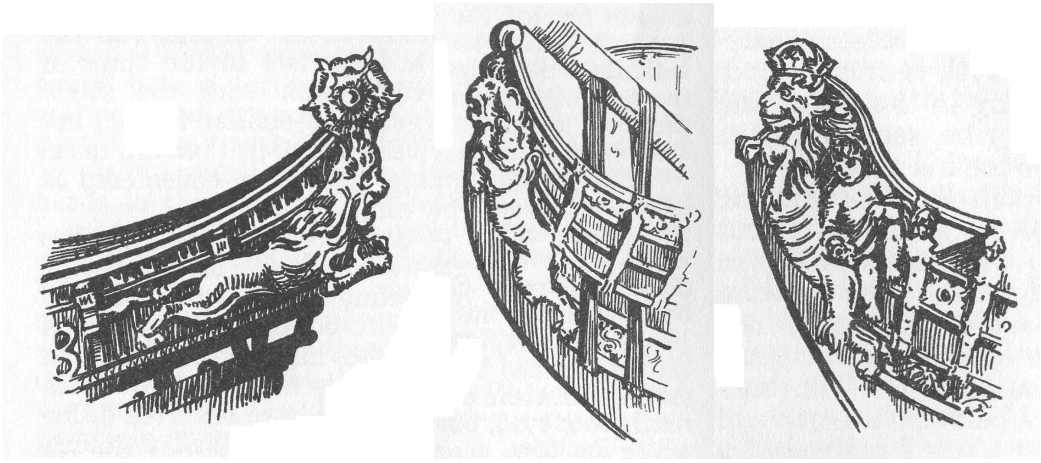
The 17th century manner of carving the brackets and mullions for the stern was to carve the brackets heavily, usually as figures or half-figures, with the heads serving as corbels to support the carved mullions which rose between the stern windows to the lower edge of the taffrail. The mullions placed such give the mid-17th century stern, at first glance, an appearance of a series of verticals. The introduction of open galleries changed this design, though it did not cause its abandonment. The mullions continued to be used until they were abolished early in the 18th century in the order of 1703. They could have continued for much longer in this form, anyway, because they were not applicable once screen bulkheads were introduced, at about the same time. In the 18th century, pilaster work, often highly ornamental, took the place of the old carved brackets and mullions (Laughton 2001:136).

FIGUREHEADS IN THE 17th CENTURY

The shape of the head itself changed considerably during the 17th century, and figureheads necessarily followed this transition in shape (as depicted in Figure 18). The low, almost horizontal beakhead, with its vulnerability to the weather and its tendency to throw up water was progressively sloped upward so that by the middle of the 17th century it slanted about 30 degrees to the horizontal, and by the end of the century it had taken an even steeper angle, culminating in an almost vertical attitude for the figurehead. The effect of the upward tendency was to introduce a curve into the knee that formed the principal timber of the beak and to cause the rails along the side to be both raised and curved. In a few English ships the frieze survived these changes until the late 1670s. By the turn of the 18th century, the figurehead was generally upright, with boldly curved rails attaching it to the hull at the corners of the beak-head bulkhead (Norton 1976:53).

Only the most important ships were given elaborate figureheads, the lesser ships having a lion in some form placed at the end of the beak and incorporated into the structure. The lion came in a number of breeds and his stance depended on the slope of the beak. When the stern was rounded up toward the end of the century, the lion assumed a more upright stance and often grasped the top of the stemhead while glaring out ahead of the ship. Crowned lions were common in the first half of the century and became the norm by its end, and after 1660, they were often accompanied on either side by a cherub (Howard 1979:118).

The figurehead lion was regarded as a symbol of the speedy and courageous attacker, embodying characteristics that were also ascribed to the ship. At the same time, it personified the power of the ruler on whose ship it appeared, as did the lion bearing the shield on the coat of arms (Hansen and Hansen 1991:17). On the warships of royal navies, figurehead lions wore crowns as a rule. Those on English ships followed the pattern of the Edward Crown, the English royal crown preserved in the Tower of London, with lilies and crossed paws as fleurons (Hansen and Hansen 1991:18.



1613 **1665** **1670**

Figure 18. Figurehead Lions Depicting Progression in the Construction of the Beak (after Laughton 2001:70)

During the reign of James I (1603-1625) carved and gilded ornaments became fashionable, representing a notable departure from Elizabethan ships. Stern galleries had been introduced before this, and soon they became a dominant decorative element. The long, low prow and the point of the beak-head carried the same kind of ornamentation until after the middle of the 17th century (Hanson 1968:113).

PAINTWORK IN THE 17th CENTURY

Much of the beauty of ships from the 17th century comes not merely from the detail of the carvings but also from the general proportions and also from the style of painting, which was rather restrained when compared with the decorations themselves. The lower parts of the hull were left their natural wood color; the topsides were painted black or very dark blue; the decorations themselves, according to contemporary models, were painted in gold leaf, and thus contrasted glaringly with the plainness of the rest of the hull. The coat of arms on the stern is shown as gilded on most models, but the evidence of most paintings suggests that it was given the appropriate heraldic hues, providing a touch of color as an effective contrast (Lavery 1983:53-55).

The earliest surviving English example of a painting contract is for the *Henry* and the *London* in 1655, according to which 'The figure of their head to be gilded with the two figures upon the galleries, and the arms upon the upright of the stern. Their heads, sterns, galleries, rails, brackets, and ports, their sides, timberheads, and planksheers all to be primed and blacked as well as ever hath been used in the Navy, and painted gold color proper to the carved work in oil, in form and manner as the *Resolution*. Their great cabins and staterooms to be walnut tree color in oil, grained and revailed, and what is proper to be gilded to be laid gold color suitable to the *Naseby*. Their roundhouses and other cabins to be stone color and green … their half-decks, cuddy, and forecastle to be of wanescote or other color according to the direction of the master shipwright. Their bulkhead cabines upon their decks and quarter-decks, bitts, knightheads, brackets, and other things usual to be primed and painted as without board' (Howard 1979:125).

The contract states that there was a great deal of black to be used in the painting of these ships, with much of their outside being black. Rather than using the expensive gilding method, the use of 'gold color' was to be common. This was produced by painting a yellowish-brown varnish over a white background, and form of painting likely gave rise to the popular belief that a preponderance of 17th century English ships carried true gilded work. The oil paints that would have been used in the 17th century were not bright and highly glossy paint such as would be found today, due to the modes of preparation of both the oils and the pigments (Howard 1979:125).

The carving and gilding of ships virtually began during the reign of Elizabeth I, and by the time of her death both were used considerably. The cost of such embellishment continued to rise, as more ships were built utilizing these techniques. In 1598-9 the cost for carving and gilding the *White Bear* was £377; in 1610 for the *Prince Royal* it was £1,309, and in 1641 £3,327; while in 1637 aboard the *Sovereign of the Seas* it cost £6,691. After such a boom in the use of these techniques came the inevitable decline, with the painting of the largest ships was costing only two or three hundreds of pounds. This great reduction was made possible chiefly by the abandonment of the lavish application of gold leaf (Laughton 2001:20).

A 17th CENTURY CASE STUDY: *SOVEREIGN OF THE SEAS* (1637)

The *Sovereign of the Seas*, launched in 1637, was designed by Phineas Pett. At the time, she was the largest English warship ever built, and while that monumental distinction was inevitably lost, she was certainly the most elaborately and extensively decorated vessel to have sailed the seas, covered as she was, literally from stem to stern, with carved and gilded embellishments (Bryan 1995:9). Pett himself is quoted as having written in his journal, "She was so gorgeously ornamented with carving and gilding that she seemed to have been designed rather for a vain display of magnificence than for the service of the State (Richardson 1916:4)." Her ornaments were extravagant, and the gilding alone cost over £7,000, an immense sum at that time (the construction of the entire vessel cost £40,000) (Stammers 1990:8). A contemporary painting, by an unnamed artist, shows Pett's son, Peter Pett with the *Sovereign of the Seas*, and is depicted in Figure 19.

Figure 19. Peter Pett and the Sovereign of the Seas (after Callender 1930:Plate XII)

The gargantuan proportions of the *Sovereign of the Seas* manifested Charles I's ambitions, for he made her as massive as he pleased, ignoring the nay-saying and predictions of doom coming from all of the English authorities on shipbuilding and navigation other than his own contractors. These men claimed that a ship the size of the *Sovereign* could not possibly function in British waters, but the king ignored the specialists. The title of sovereign was one of the traditional titles adopted by English monarchs, dating from the time of King John (1199 to 1216). The phrase specifically referred to English claims to territorial authority over the Narrow Seas, the waters between England and the European continent, which claims were being renewed under Charles' rule (Bryan 1995:11).

Designed by Phineas Pett, who had built the *Prince Royal* before, the *Sovereign* was constructed by his son Peter, with Gerard Christmas and his sons John and Mathias carving the embellishments. The author of the decorations of the *Sovereign of the Seas* was Thomas Heywood, a prolific if not profound dramatist, very popular and successful at the time. Anthony van Dyck, in his capacity as court painter, is often credited with the ornamental scheme, but this is probably a popular misconception. Charles I chose Heywood no doubt because he knew and enjoyed his work, for along with Inigo Jones and the Christmas family, he created masques for the court (Bryan 1995:11).

The ship was all aglitter, with her exterior showing more gilded carving than plain timber. She was decorated simply but sumptuously in shimmering gold on a contrasting field of black, a color scheme that was to become traditional on English warships. She had a long beak projecting before the stem, a square upright beakhead bulkhead, and at her sides were glazed quarter galleries with ogee domes and great lanterns atop them. Almost her entire outer surface was divided by mouldings into compartments holding decorative badges or devices (Bryan 1995:12).

The figurehead on the *Sovereign of the Seas* was King Edgar the Peaceful riding a galloping charger, trampling seven prostrate lesser kings. Edgar, who reigned from 959 to 975, was one of the first English kings to show an interest in naval affairs, although his medieval fleets were primitive and ad hoc forces to say the least. One of his chief summer pastimes, according to legend, was to make a progress about his realm in a boat with six or eight of his vassal kings serving as oarsmen. This tale does not relate so brutal a treatment of subordinates as did the *Sovereign*'s figurehead, but it might have been a modest source that was made more dramatic in nautical sculpture (Callender 1930:6-7). King Edgar was likely chosen because of his pioneering connections with the English Navy and, more importantly, his connection with the English claim to dominion of the open waters around their island referred to in the *Sovereign*'s name.

Along the beak were the Greyhounds of Henry VII, the Dragon of Cadwallader, the Lion and Unicorn, the Rose of England, the Thistle of Scotland, the Lily of France, the Tudor Portcullis, the Prince of Wales' Feathers, the Harp of Ireland, and the royal monograms C.R. and H.M. ("Carolus Rex" and Henrietta Maria – Charles and his queen) twisted into many variations, with diadems crowning them. The stemhead was a lion ridden by a cherub, while the catheads were supported by goat-legged satyrs groaning from their load (Bryan 1995:14). Figure 20 depicts the figurehead and bow decorations on the *Sovereign of the Seas*.

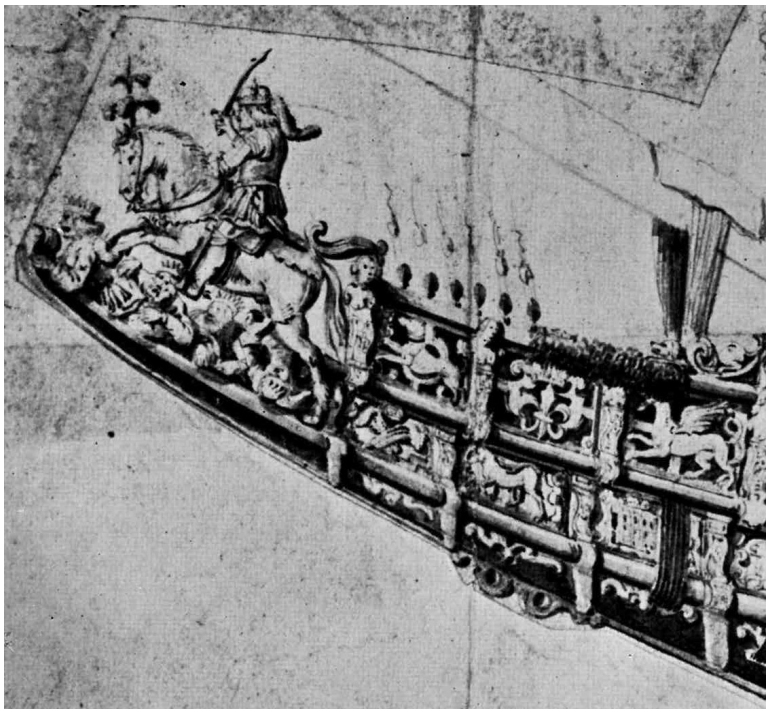


Figure 20. Figurehead and Bow Decorations on *Sovereign of the Seas* by Willem van de Velde the Elder (after Callender 1930:Plate V)

The beakhead bulkhead (shown in Figure 21) was embrasured for six large guns, and the apertures for them were shaped into arabesques made of crowns-imperial, fleurs-de-lis, and grotesque masks. Acanthus leaves and lion masks formed pedestals for six twice-life-sized statues of Virtues in the Classical style. They were arranged three to either side of a central doorway, and included Counsel with a folded scroll, Carefulness with a sea-compass, Industry with a linstock ready to fire, Strength with a sword, Valor with a spherical globe, and Victory with a laurel wreath (Bryan 1995:14).

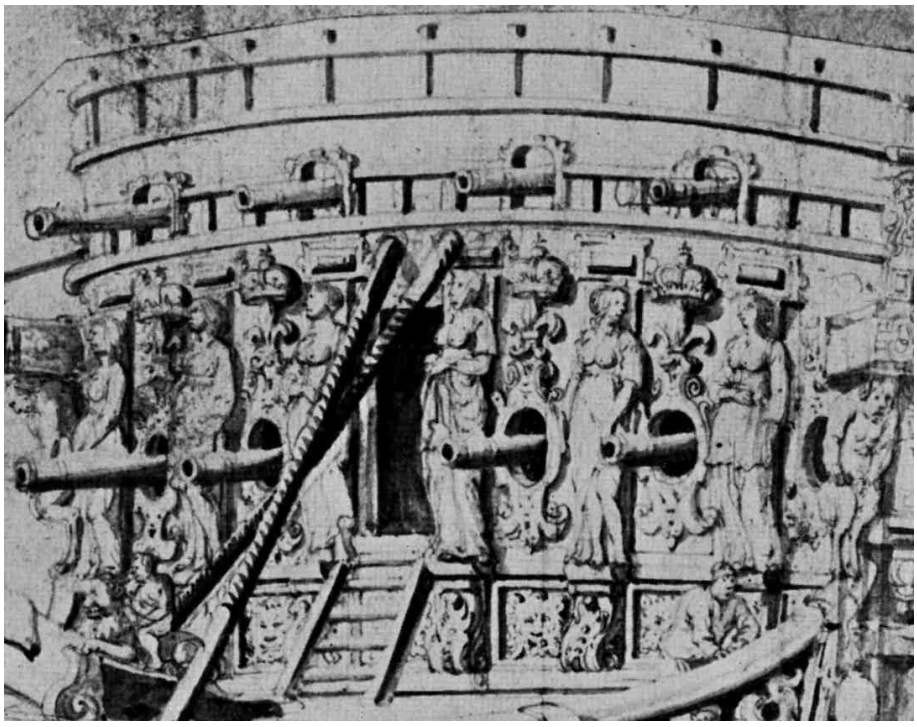


Figure 21. Beakhead Bulkhead Decorations on *Sovereign of the Seas Seas* by Willem van de Velde the Elder (after Callender 1930:Plate V)

The broadsides of the ship were arranged in three superimposed longitudinal reliefs, which are depicted in Figure 22. The lowest was a series of festoons and flourishes around shields and lozenges. The middle freize, which was interrupted by gun ports, was an arrangement of military trophies, including a staggering number and variety of martial objects containing a collection of all types of weapons, armor and other accessories of war, both archaic and contemporary. The uppermost frieze was interrupted by the waist of the main deck, but rose higher on the quarter deck and poop deck levels of the sterncastle. It held the Signs of the Zodiac, alternating with the Royal Initials and the busts of Roman Emperors surrounded by wreaths of foliage.

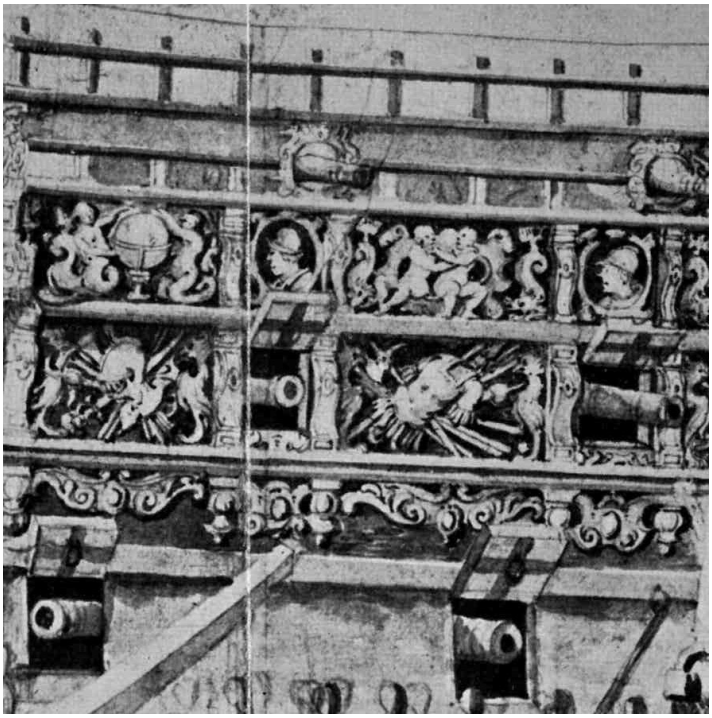


Figure 22. Close-Up of the Broadside Decorations on *Sovereign of the Seas* *Seas* by Willem van de Velde the Elder (after Callender, 1930:Plate V)

Besides these reliefs, each side of the *Sovereign of the Seas* was also decorated with an elaborate entry portal, where two caryatids supported an architrave upon which rested two cherubs holding a crown over a bust of Charles I. Additionally, the hancing pieces marking the transition of deck levels atop the ship were carved in the images of various Classical gods: Jupiter, with his thunderbolt, astride an eagle; Mars, with a fox to show his cunning, brandishing a sword and shield; Neptune, with his trident and attendant dolphins, riding a seahorse; and Aeolus, with his chameleon (thought to live upon air alone) and the Four Winds (Callender 1930:6-7).

The *Sovereign*'s stern was adorned with many sculptures and Latin inscriptions. On the lower counter on either side of the rudder was the couplet, "Qui mare, qui fluetus, ventos, navesque gubernat, Sospitet hanc arcem, Carole Magne, tuam" (May He whom the seas and tides obey and the winds that blow and the ships Guard this, Great Charles, thy man-of-war with sustenance Divine). There were numerous shorter inscriptions, many drawn from Virgin or the Vulgate Bible, but sometimes single words, even monosyllabic ones, were used, and apparently Heywood's own inventions were not in what can universally be considered good Latin (Bryan 1995:15).

The taffrail had as its general motto "validis incumbite remis" (Bend to your stout oars). In the center of the taffrail stood Victory, with her wings displayed and arms extended, depicted in Figure 23. Around one arm she wore a crown to signify riches, and around the other, a wreath of laurel to signify honor. In her hands she held two banderoles with mottos, which she gave to two heroes. In her right hand she had one

saying "Nava," which was intended to mean "Endeavor with all one's might (Bryan 1995:16)." In her left hand she had another saying "Clava," which was intended to translate as "Be Valiant," according to the explanation of the decorations published by Thomas Heywood (Callender 1930:8).

The first imperative direction she gave to Jason, who stood at the port edge of the taffrail. He wore a king's spiky crown and royal mantle, and bore as attributes an oar or rudder in one arm and the Golden Fleece draped over the other. The second instruction she gave to a muscular Hercules, Jason's starboard counterpart, who wore a lion's skin and carried a club, his usual symbols. Between Jason and Victory, Neptune rode a fish-tailed hippocampus while grasping his trident, while Aeolus astride an eagle was carved between Victory and Hercules (Callender 1930:8-9). The taffrail presents the necessary virtues needed by the ship to be an effective warship. Victory, the main purpose of the vessel, flanked by the natural forces and human qualities needed for success: wind and water represented by Aeolus and Neptune, industry and perseverance represented by Jason, and finally, strength and courage represented by Hercules (Bryan 1995:16).

Above this main tableau was the taffrail, with masks and abstract flourishes along its bottom, and with "Soli Deo Gloriam," which translates as a somewhat cryptic "Sun God Glory," inscribed along its top. In the center of the taffrail, projecting beyond the stern, was the great navigational lantern, with its own domed roof. It was so huge that it could hold ten men with room to spare. To either side, on the ends of the railing, stood sculptures like finials, representing to port the lion and to starboard the unicorn.

Figure 23. Main Tableau and Taffrail Stern Decorations on *Sovereign of the Seas Seas* by Willem van de Velde the Elder (after Callender 1930:Plate IX)

Beneath the main tableau, the stern was visually divided into a grille or three wide decorative vertical and horizontal bands (shown in Figure 24), with glazed windows occupying the remaining spaces. These six wide bands were themselves divided by mouldings and caryatids into grids of square compartments. The uppermost horizontal bad was quite simple, consisting of scallop-shaped shingles painted black with their semi-circular edges outlined in gold. The second or middle horizontal band displayed a sculptured frieze representing a cavalcade of riders progressing through foliage towards the center of the ship. These riders were not, however, all horsemen. The one furthest left bore a sword or scepter, and his mount possessed a neck seemingly too long and curving to belong to a horse. The next rider carried in one hand what appears to have been a battle-axe, and held a round object in the other; his steed seems to have had the snout, floppy ears, and drooping teats of a she-hound. The next to last rider and mount

seems to have been a familiar man on horseback; while the pair furthest right was a classically draped lady seated sidesaddle upon a great cat, perhaps a lioness (Bryan 1995:17).

The third horizontal band of decorations was split into upper and lower divisions itself. The upper tier of these consisted of various heraldic beasts: the lion, the unicorn, and what were perhaps dragons and griffins. Beneath these were four figures with various tokens which were likely representations of the Four Elements. At the far left a nude, Fire, sat amidst abstract flame-like shapes. In the center left was a woman, representing Water, nude save for a crown, who held the tail of a dolphin as she sat on its head. On the center right a figure sat astride a bull or cow, personifying Earth, and at the far right Air held out a hand with a bird perched upon it (Bryan 1995:17).

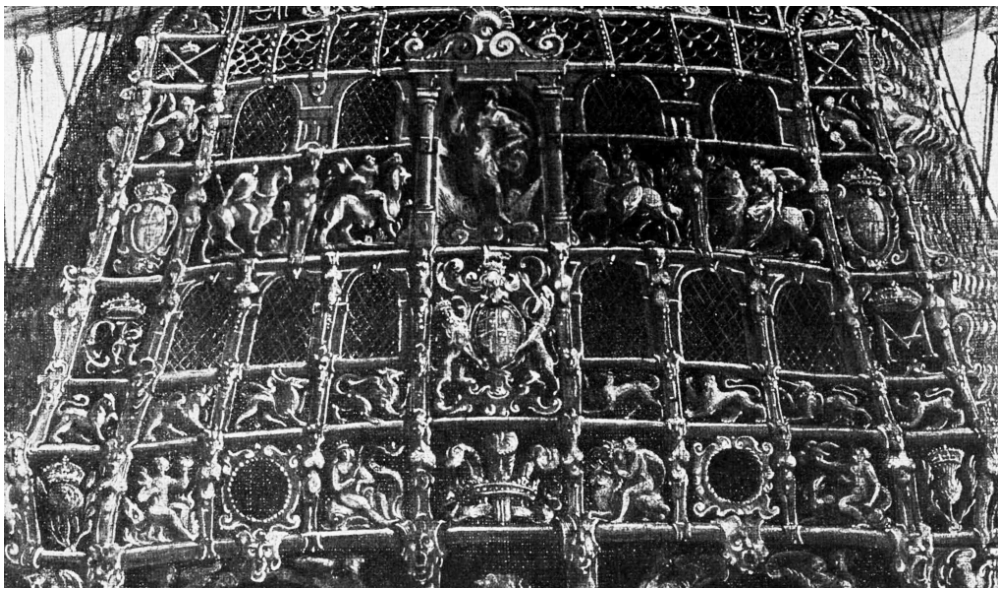


Figure 24. The Three Horizontal Bands of Stern Decorations on *Sovereign of the Seas Seas* by Willem van de Velde the Elder (after Callender, 1930:Plate V)

The two wide vertical decorative bands on either side corresponded to the aft faces of the quarter galleries, and were almost identical to one another. In their uppermost grid they held a crossed sword and scepter, with a crown above. Below this appeared a winged cherub; and the third grid held the national arms, framed by earshell-work, without supporters and with a diadem above. The next block down displayed again the royal monograms C.R. and H.M., each surmounted by a crown. Beneath these came beasts interlocking with those along the upper half of the lowest horizontal band. At the bottom of either side was the Scottish thistle, crowned of course, with the entire arrangement terminating in a supporting gargoyle.

The central vertical band consisted of an aedicule in three stories. The uppermost was made of a broken-arch pediment of scrollwork and a large cockle shell, held up by slender columns. These framed a niche within which stood a figure in Antique armor of crested helmet, cuirass, leather kilt, and cloak. This personage held a baton, and what appear to have been banners lie at his feet. This may be a representation of Charles I as a Classical hero. Although the facial features are not sufficiently distinct to affirm that this was a portrait of the king, the attribute of a baton or scepter, symbol of royal authority, makes this a plausible interpretation. Reinforcing this notion is the figure's alignment with the other national emblems in the same central vertical field. Beneath him were the royal arms in all their glory, complete in every detail: surrounded by the Garter, supported by the lion and unicorn, and crested by a knight's helm with a lion-decorated crown atop. At the base of this aedicule were the triple plumes of the Prince of Wales (Bryan 1995:18).

Beneath all this, adorning the counter of the ship, were two trophies arranged in a goblet-like outline. The "bowl" was formed by two back-to-back winged females with an open port between them, with the "stem" made of another winged woman, here squatting, and the "base" was formed by a square panel flanked by dolphins. Grotesque masks peppered the counter in several places, and the rudder was adorned with a lion's head.

Many of the other decorative motifs seen aboard *Sovereign of the Seas* illuminated Charles I's vision of himself as a monarch. These are most literally proclaimed in the many Latin inscriptions. It is true that quite a few of the national and personal insignia found here (lions, unicorns, roses, harps, thistles, and royal monograms) were found on the vessels launched by his less brazen predecessors. Similarly, such motifs as the Classical gods, the Roman emperors, and the Signs of the Zodiac may have been used as conventional decorative groups, but they also illustrate his pretensions to virtually unlimited authority. They do this by representing cosmic and temporal powers to which he felt equal or over which he pretended to hold sway. In a broader sense, the very name of the ship proclaimed his notions of his own omnipotence, and the superabundant effect of her staggeringly rich décor created an awesome impression of his power and glory (Bryan 1995:19).

COMMONWEALTH PERIOD

The Commonwealth Period (roughly 1650-1659) is known for its severity in taste, and this was reflected in the reduction of carving and gilding aboard English ships of this period. This, however, does not mean that they were by any means plain in their decoration. While lavish decoration was initiated by the early Stuarts with the *Prince Royal* and the *Sovereign of the Seas*, the Puritans who ruled after the Civil War did nothing to restrict it, and in fact helped it to spread throughout the generality of the fleet (Lavery 1983:47). The ships of the early Restoration period had as much or more carved work aboard, and generally were more highly ornamented, than any of the Stuart ships, excepting the *Sovereign of the Seas* (Laughton 2001:21).

There was certainly a great reduction in cost, but it was almost entirely due to the substitution of gold paint for gold leaf. The extent of the decoration aboard Commonwealth vessels compares quite closely with those of the Restoration period (both visually and from a cost standpoint). There was certainly some degree of "stiffness" to the ornamentation applied to Commonwealth ships, but this is also likely due to the fact that the carvers were passing from the formality of the Tudor style into the freedom of the Restoration style (Laughton 2001:13).

Less is known about the figureheads of Commonwealth ships, but the *Naseby* is one ship whose figurehead has become almost something of a legend. She was said to have had a figurehead of Oliver Cromwell on horseback, trampling six nations under foot: a Scot, an Irishman, a Dutchman, a Frenchman, a Spaniard, and an Englishman. A

carved representation of Fame held a laurel over his head with the words "God with us." After the Restoration, this figure was removed from the *Naseby* and replaced, according to Samuel Pepys, with a figurehead of Neptune (Laughton 2001:71).

RESTORATION PERIOD

During the reign of Charles II (1660-1685) no fundamental changes were made to the appearance of ships, except that more use was made of royal emblems and coats-of-arms. Though Restoration ships were heavily ornamented, especially by today's standards, they continued under the Renaissance ideal of ornamenting only the structure and adopting no new feature unless it was a necessity. It has been stated that the government of Charles II, "lacked confidence, a sense of grandeur, and all belief in its own inevitable destiny (Plumb 1967:15)." This was, then, hardly the type of government in which dramatic new strides would be expected in the shipbuilding arts.

The attitude of the central government, however, was only one facet relating to the growth of decorations aboard ship in the mid- to late 17th century. Though he was a somewhat self-indulgent ruler, Charles II did attempt (several times) to cut back on the waste of money in such projects. Coupled with his wishes, the officials of the Navy Board also argued for greater economy when building ships, but with little success due to the fact that the decorations were not fully under control of the central government, but rested (as did many other matters) with the prerogative of the master shipwright. The shipwrights, appear to have felt that it was imperative that their ships be as attractive and ostentatious as possible (Lavery 1983:47). In fact, the officials in London, from the King down to the Navy Board, had little control over the quality and quantity of ships'

decorations. Typically, a model was sent to the Navy Board for inspection before a ship was built, but the official correspondence shows very few amendments being made as such, and there is some evidence that the master shipwrights made changes after the model had been approved (Lavery 1983:47). As early as 1638 complaints were made of the 'captain, master builder, or the like, whose ambition it is to have "their" ships, as they call them, richest and gayest, to waste the King's treasure in a vain expense, either in point of quality of painting, carving of joining, or in point of curiosity of workmanship' (Holland 1896:33-34). The carvings were therefore completed based on the designs of untutored master shipwrights and executed by vernacular craftsmen. Kings sometimes influenced the decorations of their great prestige ships, but there was no true attempt to impose any standards or uniformity to these decorations. Yet by the second half of the 17th century a distinctive English style had evolved, and the different ships of the fleet had a great deal in common and there had evolved what might be termed a 'Charles II' style (Lavery 1983:47).

It was during Charles II's reign that French shipbuilding began to have an impact on the way the English designed their vessels. The French had put great artistic effort into the design of their ships, and in appearance they were very different from the English ones: much more angular on the stern and quarters and more rounded in the bow. The carvings aboard French ships were not quite as numerous as those on English ships, but generally they were more elaborate and the ships had open galleries in the stern for the comfort of the officers (Lavery 1983:56).

It was in 1673 that the French style of decoration first began to affect England's vessels. Charles II was so impressed by the French ship *Superbe* that he ordered her design to be copied by English shipwright Anthony Deane. Deane's two ships, the *Harwich* and *Swiftsure*, were very similar in style to the French vessel, both in the method of placing the carvings and in the use of stern galleries.

The head did not change fundamentally after 1670, but many superficial details were altered. The heads of the ships of 1677, influenced as they were by French Baroque, were particularly florid, but this trend did not last long. In succeeding years there was a tendency for the upper rail to become higher, thus making the head deeper. On three-deckers this led to the introduction of a fourth rail, which gave a rather clumsy appearance. The lion figurehead, still common to the majority of ships, gradually became more standardized in form, and there was apparently a standard set of rules for drawing it on the draught. Around 1700, the vertical supporters of the rails began to curve inwards instead of outwards, and this was to remain the fashion until the end of the age of sail (Lavery 1983:58).

During the Restoration, ships continued to be built and ornamented as they had during the Commonwealth period, but it inherited a heavy debt, causing it to continue with relatively small carved figures, and applied most of the decoration to rails, brackets, and other essential parts of the ship (Laughton 2001:21). The only new feature introduced in this period was a simple balustrading for the galleries, imitated (like the galleries themselves) from the French (Laughton 2001:14). One minor innovation was

the carving of garlands around the gun ports. Among other small alterations, the beakhead was shortened, and despite an official injunction from the Admiralty prohibiting the use of carved ornaments, they continued to prosper (Hanson 1968:121).

After the Restoration, very few ships were fitted with a figurehead other than the lion, who continued his dominance of English figureheads. Later in Charles II's reign, the lion was made more elaborate and was sometimes seen with a cupid riding atop him. Although this lion and cupid combination was used as early as 1619, it was not common until late in the Restoration period (Laughton 2001:73). Toward the end of Charles II's reign, after the conclusion of a series of wars with the Dutch, shipboard ornamentation became more extravagant. It has been postulated that this was caused by the unrestrained rivalry of the shipwrights (Laughton 2001:23).

In 1661, the Navy Board was ordered by the Duke of York to prepare an estimate for two new second-rates, adding that "His Majesty intends them very plain, without any other carving or gilding than the arms on the stern." These ships were the *Royal Katherine* and the *Royal Oak*, launched in 1664, and although no models exist of the ships a drawing (Figure 25) depicts the *Royal Katherine* and shows that although there seems to have been economizing on other portions of the ship, the stern retained all of the usual heavy ornamentation common during the period (Laughton 2001:21).

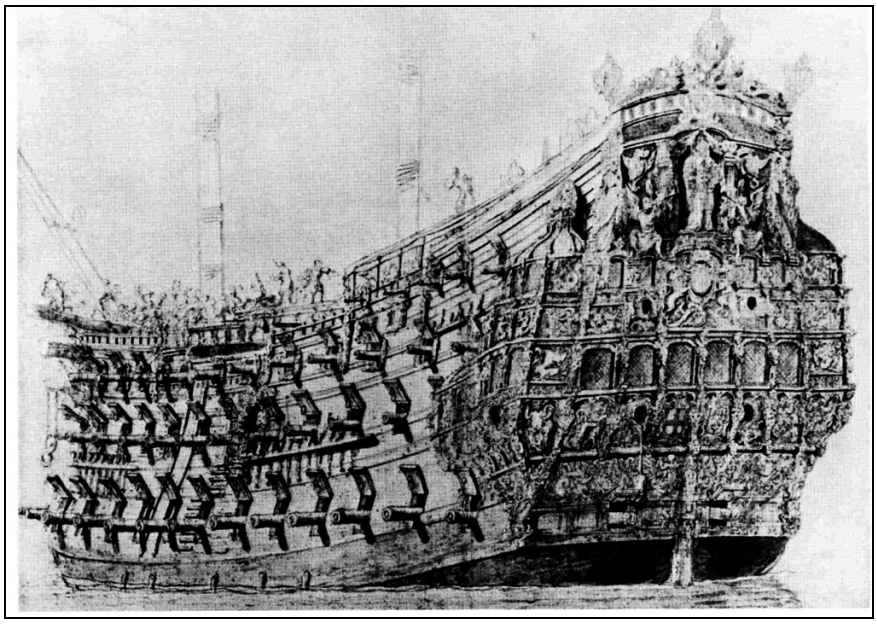


Figure 25. Stern Drawing of the *Royal Katherine* of (1664) by Willem van de Velde the Elder (after Laughton 2001:Plate 11)

Under William III (1689-1702) shipwrights and carvers introduced increasingly extravagant ornamentation by trying to put more into the limited space at their disposal than the space would allow. By using so much small ornamentation, the artists inflated the cost of their carvings so enormously that naval administration had little choice but to tie them down to very strict limits beginning in the 18th century (Laughton 2001:15). Numerous models exist of the ships built during William III's reign; however, only a few of these have been identified, leaving it impossible to precisely trace the development of the figurehead during this period. The lion remained the common figurehead for all ships from 80 guns downwards, and was often joined by a pair of Cupids, but for most three-decked ships elaborate figureheads became the rule. The double equestrian figure, which had its heyday in the 18th century, was probably introduced at this time, although variants of it have always existed (Laughton 2001:73).

Toward the end of the 17th century the solid sterns were given a more open appearance by splendid stern galleries and balconies with decorative carvings. The beakhead disappeared and the figurehead was fitted to the stem post in the way we are accustomed to seeing it now. The most remarkable figureheads were mainly equestrian statues of reigning monarchs, many of them of considerable artistic quality, though these equestrian figureheads were typically only seen on large ships named after members of the royal family (Howard 1979:118).

Inside the ship, the bulkheads and other structural features were as highly decorated as the bow and stern. The bulkheads were enhanced with carved pilasters and vertical brackets holding either half or full figures, and the belfry was similarly treated. There were also carved balusters to the stairways from the quarterdeck.

In the years before 1700 the sums paid for carved works of the rates were as follows (Laughton 2001:24):

First Rate: £896

Second Rate: £420

Third Rate (80 guns): £164-£293

Third Rate (70 guns): £160-£277

Fourth Rate (60 guns): £144-£157

Fourth Rate (50 guns): £74-£103

Fifth Rate: £65-£93

Sixth Rate: £42-£52

CHAPTER IV

THE 18th CENTURY

The 18th century was a time of great change and tightening restrictions in the Royal Navy. The Admiralty took the first effective step toward limiting the excessive amount of decoration on ships by an Admiralty Order in 1700. According to the Order, the cost of decorating a First Rate was not to exceed £500 and, at the other end of the scale, a Sixth Rate could not exceed £25 worth of decoration (Howard 1979:193). This was followed in 1703 by a more drastic Admiralty Order directing 'that the carved works be reduced to only a lion and trail board for the head, with mouldings instead of brackets placed against the timbers; that the stern have only a taffrail and two quarter pieces, and in lieu of brackets between the lights of the stern, galleries and bulkheads, to have mouldings fixed against the timbers; that the joiners' works of the sides of the great cabin, coach, wardroom and round-house of each ship be fixed only with slit deals, without any sort of moulding or cornice, and the painting be only plain color…' (Laughton 2001:25). The Order also deprived the beakhead bulkhead of its carvings, which were replaced by pilasters and arches made of plain mouldings. The compartments that this formed were painted with heraldic trophies of arms, floral scrolls, and motifs from baroque painting. First Rates were, with the exception of the allowable expenditure listed for their decoration, exempt for the other rules laid out in this Order. Table 1 depicts the costs of the total carved work for the various rates just before 1700.

Table 1. Available Expenditures for Decoration on English Men-of-War in the Late 17th Century (Data from Laughton, 2001)

Rate	Guns	Allowable Expenditure for Carved Work Pre-1700	Allowable Expenditure for Carved Work After 1700	Allowable Expenditure for Carved Work After 1737
First		£896	£500	£166
Second		£420	£300	£146
Third	80	£164-£293	£150	£114
	70	£160-£277	£130	£87
Fourth	60	£144-£157	£100	£65
	50	£75-£103	£80	£47
Fifth		£65-£93	£50	£37
Sixth		£42-£52	£25	£28

To date, a schedule of prices for allowable carvings in the several rates issued in connection with the Order of 1703 has yet to be found, though surely one must have existed. Master Shipwright John Hayward did, however, keep a record of the ships he built or refitted and the sums that were spent on their carving and painting. Table 2 is a summary of Hayward's records, and covers a period of 18 years, from 1712 to 1730, and includes all classes of ships, and may be seen as indicative of the type of building which was occurring (Laughton 2001:26-27).

Table 2. Inventory of Money Spent on Decoration of Ships Built from 1712 – 1730 by John Hayward (Data from Laughton, 2001)

Rate	Ship	Guns	Date	Carving	Painting
1	*Royal George*	100	4/23/12 – 9/20/15	£323.7.0	£273.5.10 1/2
1	*Brittania*	100	2/27/16 – 10/3/19	£290.5.0	£179.18.11
2	*Neptune*	90	2/1/25 – 10/15/30	£132.0.0	£124.18.8 1/2
3	*Cambridge*	80	11/18/13 – 9/17/15	£56.0.0	£104.11. 10 1/2
3	*Revenge*	70	3/27/17 – 10/13/18	£59.16.0	£87.8.6 1/4
3	*Northumberland*	70	9/9/19 – 7/13/21	£69.17.0	£63.10.11 1/4
3	*Stirling Castle*	70	7/12/21 – 4/23/23	£70.5.0	£72.7.3 1/4
3	*Kent*	70	5/2/22 – 8/10/24	£78.5.0	£64.18.0 1/4
4	*Panther*	50	3/3/14 – 4/26/16	£20.15.0	£41.6.7 1/2
4	*Dartmouth*	50	8/11/14 – 8/7/16	£24.4.6	£38.2.8
4	*Guernsey*	50	10/10/16 – 10/24/17	£24.0.0	£35.4.5
4	*Weymouth*	50	10/30/17 – 2/26/18	£24.5.0	£60.5.2 1/2
4	*Leopard*	50	9/23/19 – 4/18/21	£25.7.0	£36.14.5
4	*Argyle*	50	5/18/20 – 7/5/22	£24.18.6	£44.10.0 1/4
4	*Superb*	60	5/13/20 – 11/10/21	£25.0.0	£55.13.9
4	*Falmouth*	50	7/20/26 – 4/3/29	£40.2.0	£41.4.11 1/4
5	*Ludlow Castle*	40	6/30/22 – 2/1/23	£30.12.6	£37.8.7 1/4
5	*Lark*	40	1/9/24 – 8/2/26	£30.12.0	£39.9.5
5	*Princess Louisa*	40	10/12/26 – 8/8/28	£26.17.0	£40.12.2
6	*Shoreham*	20	10/28/19 – 8/25/20	£18.2.0	£38.12.11 1/2
6	*Squirrel*	20	4/5/27 – 10/19/27	£22.13.6	£26.18.5
6	*Rose*	20	1/9/23 – 9/8/24	£22.13.6	£17.19.0 1/4

Late in the century (1796), the most restrictive of all orders was issued by Lord Spencer 'to explode carved work altogether on board HM Ships that may be built or repaired in the future, except what may be necessary for the moulding about the scroll or billet head, and the stern and quarters'. Shipwrights, captains, and sailors alike were displeased with this order, and every effort was made to evade the regulation (Norton 1976:67). With respect to the fiddlehead, this Order had little effect, because the change was so unpopular and seldom followed by the shipwrights that it became virtually a dead letter. But in general the Order was followed, and for a time, men-of-war lost the small

ornaments which they had retained for so long. Ornamental rails, hancing pieces, and trailboards were completely eliminated, and all that remained was a greatly reduced taffrail, an equally reduced figurehead, and almost vestigial quarter pieces and finishings to the galleries (Laughton 2001:28).

The new Orders enacted throughout the century caused quite an imposition on both draughtsmen and shipwrights, and brought about a revolution in decoration of English men-of-war. The Baroque works that had decorated the earlier ships were replaced by the neo-Classical Georgian style decoration. Carving was revived somewhat as the century progressed, but usually it was confined to the taffrail and the supporters at the ends of the stern galleries (Howard 1979:192). Some of the models still in existence from the beginning of the 18th century reflect the contemporary interest in China, showing the figurehead lions carved in Chinese style and even figures of Chinamen painted on the beakhead bulkhead (Howard 1979:192).

The Georgian style of decoration that developed in the 18th century was restrained and quite sober in contrast to the extravagances and frivolities of the later Stuarts. It still had little in common with land architecture, but it does represent the spirit of the age, and the desire for order and stability is reflected in the regular lines of the ships' decorations, while the figureheads show a graceful classical style. Though they resembled nothing on the exteriors of contemporary buildings, the friezes on the sides of ships may well have been influenced by the style of interior decoration then in use. The Georgian style was tasteful and elegant, which was fitting for an age of great architecture, but, although less extravagant than preceding styles, it was still too expensive for some (Lavery 1983:65).

The second version of the Georgian style, which was begun around 1750, lasted through the Seven Years War and the American War with only minor alterations. The next war, against the French Revolutionaries, was more intense, and the Britain fought for her survival against a strong combination of European powers, causing her to use enormous fleets. In 1795, therefore, the Spencer administration began a new purge on decorations that was even more drastic even than that issued in 1703. It called for an end to the painted friezes on the sides of ships and a discontinuation of the carved figures on the stern, which were supplanted by small bas-relief carvings, imitation rails, and mouldings around the stern edges (Lavery 1983:65-68).

FIGUREHEADS IN THE 18th CENTURY

The head of the ship became shallower in the mid-18th century when the rails were brought closer together, giving a slimmer and more streamlined appearance. The rails were nearly parallel to the waterline as they passed the stempost, but then curved sharply upward just before reaching the figurehead. The head itself was close to vertical, and, in some cases around the middle of the century, was angled slightly backwards. Below the head, the cutwater, which had been straight for almost a century, began to curve slightly inward at this time, as well, allowing it to regain some of the features which had been lost in the 1650s. Although the appearance was similar, it was very different, structurally, from the old head, being much smaller and less vulnerable, and far more strongly supported (Lavery 1983:65).

The lion was the figurehead designated for use on all English men-of-war, according to the Order, except on First Rates, which were allowed to have elaborate figureheads. First Rates were often given "double heads" (as depicted in Figure 26), which consisted of figures on the sides of the principal figure, which were usually in the form of either an allegorical figure or a figure of the person after whom the ship was named (Howard 1979:193). These double heads tended to be rather peculiarly shaped, due to the near vertical position of the head at the time, but this oddity was overcome by the high standard of the carving applied to them (Lavery 1983:62). The figureheads were usually gilded or 'gilt painted' until about the 1760s, when the fashion for painting them in color, which lasted until the very end of the sailing ship era, came into vogue. The rest of the head – the knee, the cheeks, the head timbers, and the rails – was painted in accordance with the Order of 1703, carved work being limited to giving the rails mouldings. The stem knee, like the lowest wales, was painted black, but there was a good deal of variety about the painting of the rest of the head (Howard 1979:193).

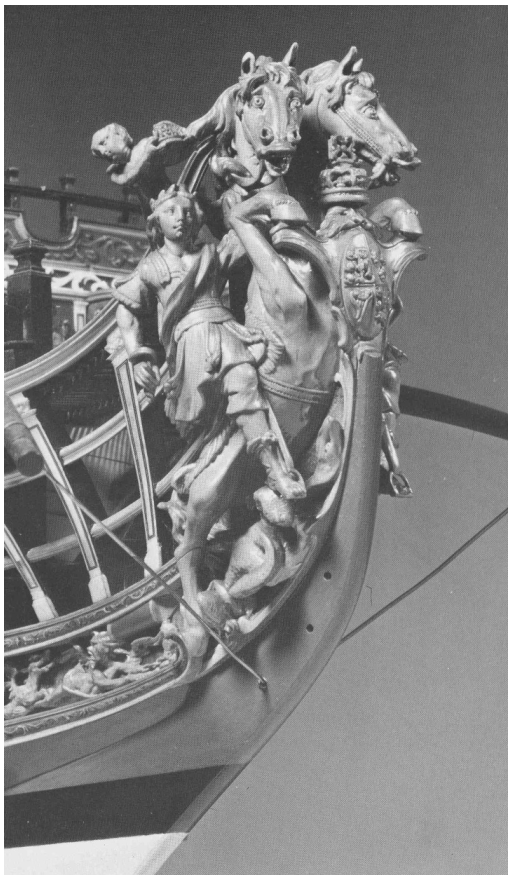


Figure 26. Double-Equestrian Head on the *Royal George* (1756) (after Lavery 1983:64)

After 1727 the Admiralty allowed Second Rates to have figures appropriate to their names, and by about the middle of the century, this permission was extended to all but the smallest ships, which had to make do with a scroll or fiddlehead (Howard 1979:193). In the 1770s figureheads were made lighter and simpler, and many draughts of figureheads from that period have survived. At the end of the century, in the face of the growing need for economy, attempts were made to get rid of figureheads altogether and to substitute a scroll for them. Shipwrights, captains, and sailors were all displeased with the idea of a ship without a figurehead that they reappeared before long on all but the small ships, which had to make do with the scroll or a fiddlehead (Howard 1979:193).

The lion, still the most widely-used figurehead for English ships, was always carved in a heraldic style, with an upright stance that allowed him to look out over the top of the head knee. Lions and lions' heads were commonly used as ornaments on other parts of the ship, as well. Another feature that became noticeable at this time was the lion's tail, which curved up his flanks in an S and ended in a tuft of hair that was level with his ribs. This fashion rapidly became almost universal for English lion figureheads (Norton 1976:69).

When the lion was not used, its place was taken on most ships other than those with group figureheads by single figures usually representing the ship's name. Classical figures were the most popular in the second half of the 18th century, allowing the carvers to turn out more or less standard types (bearded or clean-shaven warriors, maidens, and sea gods) which could be made to suit most requirements. Ships named after contemporary or near-contemporary celebrities usually received a custom-built figurehead depicting the person in question (Norton 1976:79).

Throughout the centuries, the appearance of the lion varied, with the angle of the figurehead being dependent upon the shape of the head of the ship. Under James I the lion had been placed nearly horizontally; during the Restoration it began to be angled upward, shortly after which he was given a crown. By the end of the 17th century it had become nearly vertical, and from the time of Queen Anne until the lion figurehead virtually disappeared in 1760, its chest was thrown out and his head tilted back. The lion's appearance was also influenced for a short period of time by the interest in Chinese ornamentation which made its way into the Navy from about 1720 to 1740 (Laughton 2001:78).

With the lion figurehead, it was standard practice to have the ship's name carved on her stern, as names were not painted on the sides of English men-of-war until 1771. The practice of carving the name into the stern continued even after individual figures alluding to the ship's name were used as figureheads. During the second half of the 18th century , it is quite common to find both the figurehead and the carving on the taffrail depicting the ship's name, even once the name was painted on the stern (Laughton 2001:83-84).

One positive aspect of using the lion figurehead (and even the use of a fiddlehead) for so many vessels was that it created continuity among the ships of the fleet. Toward the end of the 18th century a number of the figurehead designs which were received by the Navy were often lacking in quality and context. So long as the proposed figure did not exceed the allowable cost, however, the Navy Board passed nearly any design which was submitted (Laughton 2001:88).

An interesting note on English figureheads is found in a document on English and Dutch shipbuilding created by Blaise Ollivier, master shipwright of the king of France, published in 1737. Ollivier had traveled through all of the major English and Dutch dockyards, taking copious notes on his observations and conversations with shipwrights, while serving as a spy for the French king. Ollivier describes a method the English were applying to a ship which was being built at Portsmouth Dockyard whereby a series of guard-irons was used to 'cage in' the both lion figurehead and the terms on the stern (shown in Figure 27). They are described as being fashioned from three, four, or five iron bars that were 1" to 1.25" in diameter. Across these bars were laid, at a distance of 2.5', another set of bars, forming a grid of iron bars to protect the carved work (Roberts

1992:172). This is the only instance of this type of application yet discovered, and it was likely an experimental attempt, as it obviously never caught on and this application is the only existing mention of this technique being used by the English.

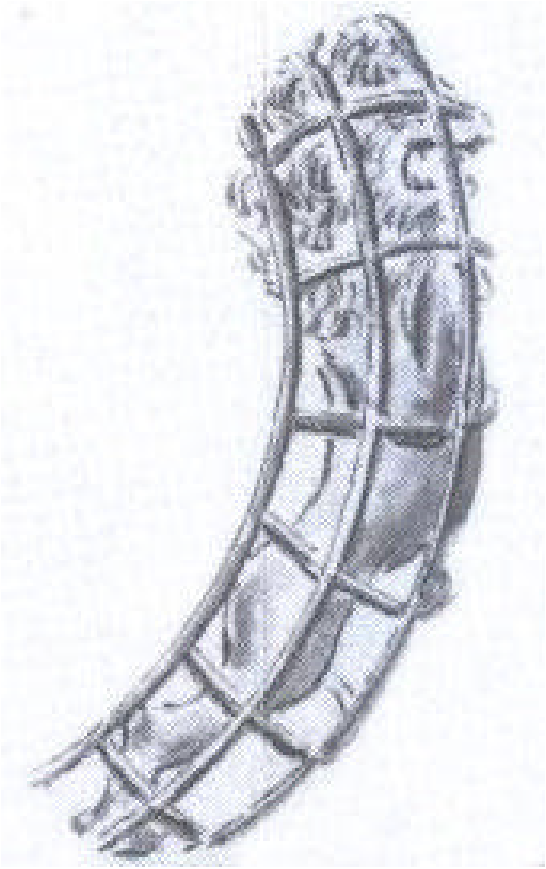


Figure 27. Caged Work on English Figurehead (after Roberts 1992:Plate 10)

QUARTER GALLERIES AND STERN IN THE 18th CENTURY

By 1710, the quarter galleries invariably leaned against the stern, causing a single flat surface, broken by galleries and windows. All ships of over 40 guns had some kind of open stern gallery. The quarterdeck gallery usually protruded over the stern, and was inset and separated by a screen bulkhead. Three-deckers had an additional similar gallery at upper deck level; many two-deckers also had a gallery at upper deck level, but it did not normally jut out beyond the line of the stern but instead was recessed, with a screen bulkhead to separate it from the cabin. This type of gallery, though stronger than the protruding quarterdeck gallery, was very weak for its position so close to the water, and must have caused problems in heavy seas. As early as 1710, the Admiralty seems to have recognized this, ordering in that year that 'there be no screen bulkheads placed in the great cabins of any of Her Majesty's ships for the future.' As seems almost customary with Admiralty Orders in the beginning of the 18th century, the order was seldom followed, and screen bulkheads were fitted until well into the 1730s. After that, the galleries of ships of the line became standardized – one on a two-decker, at quarterdeck level; and two on a three-decker, at quarterdeck and upper deck level (Lavery 1983:60).

The rails of the galleries dominated the appearance of the stern (see Figure 28). The rails were most commonly supported by decorated wooden pillars, but toward the middle of the century there was a trend toward using other forms of support. In the early part of the century the open gallery was continued around the quarter gallery at the level of the quarterdeck, but this custom died out, probably because this arrangement caused some inconvenience for the users of the quarter gallery. The rails of the open stern gallery were, nevertheless, continued around the quarter galleries in the form of false

rails, which provided much of the visual emphasis of the stern. Above the galleries and windows, the taffrail curved over the stern itself, with two smaller curved pieces above the rear faces of the quarter galleries. These allowed suitable flat surfaces, which were generally covered with elaborate carvings. The largest single carvings on the stern were the figures which formed the corners of the quarter galleries (Lavery 1983:60-62).

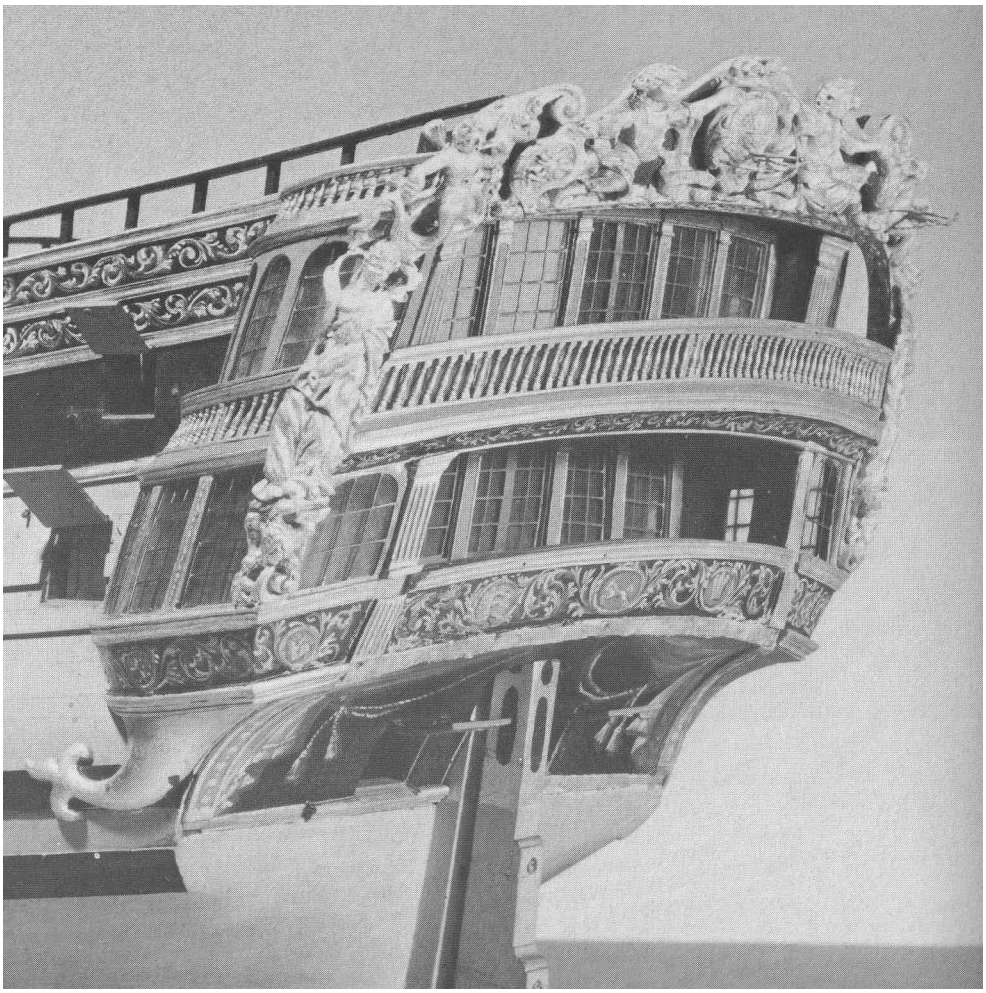


Figure 28. 18th Century Stern Gallery (after Lavery 1983:62)

Another Order was issued in April of 1742, altering the appearance of ships in a number of ways and reducing greatly the carved works on the stern, stating (Laughton 2001:28):

> In order to prevent as much as possible H.M. ships from complaining at sea, these are to direct and require you as ships come into port to refit, or are building, rebuilding, or under repair … to strengthen the sterns all that is possible, make the quarter pieces and taffrails small and very light, and in order to secure the head of the ships … to place an additional pair of cheeks to all ships of 50 guns and upwards, and to make the lion or figures of the head as light and as small as possible; keep the knees of the heads of all three-decked ships so high as to have one pair of cheeks above the hawse holes.

A new schedule of costs was likely issued in conjunction with the 1742 Order, but if it exists, it has yet to be found. A price schedule is also missing to specify the allowable costs after 1756, when new ship types were introduced, including the 74-gun ships-of-the-line. In 1773, there was a further modification when the prices for figureheads were again altered, being made more generous for ships-of-the-line, but the prices already established for quarter pieces, taffrails, and trail boards were continued (Laughton 2001:28).

In the early 18th century it was the English custom in shipbuilding to support the ends of the stern gallery by running up a pair of pilasters between them and to the taffrail in the wake of the fashion pieces. In 1737 the first use of terms (half-carved figures) were first used in this position in lieu of pilasters. This use of terms was not common until the mid-18th century, but in the second half of the century it passed through recognizable phases. When the *Royal Sovereign* was built in 1701, she had a pair of small

figures to the breast-rail in wake of the fashion piece on the upper deck, and three flowered pillars on the quarter-deck, and is likely the first English ship to be fitted as such. A depiction of the evolution of English gallery term is shown in Figure 29.

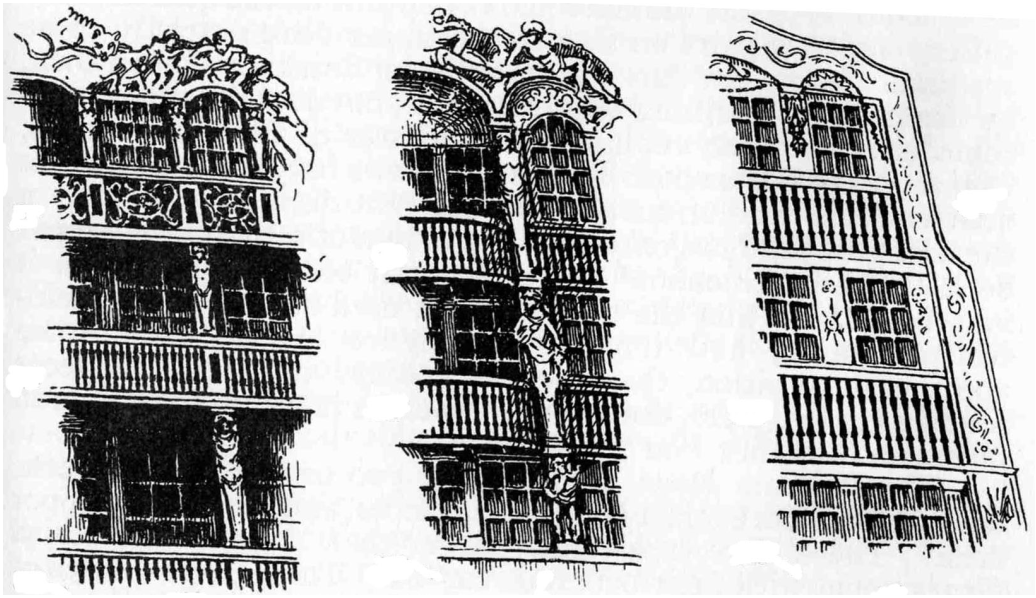


Figure 29. English Gallery Terms: 1737 – 1802 (after Laughton 2001:137)

When Balchen's *Victory* was built in 1737 she was built with poop galleries, which were a unique feature at the time. Above the breast-rail of her stern gallery were six small terms, three on each side, of which one was in the wake of the fashion piece, one abutting the quarter figure, and the third at the end of the cove, which was separated from the stern arch of the quarter gallery by one lantern. The quarter-deck and upper deck both had a single pair of terms in the wake of the fashion pieces, and this later became their normal position (Laughton 2001:137-138).

The *Royal George*, designed in the early 1740s, is indicative of the next step in the use of terms on the quarter galleries of English men-of-war (see Figure 30). In this ship, there was a pair each on the quarter deck and upper deck galleries, and a pair of whole figures as brackets on the middle deck. The terms have been increased in size from those used on earlier ships, with their pedestals going down to the foot rail of the gallery in both instances of their occurrence.

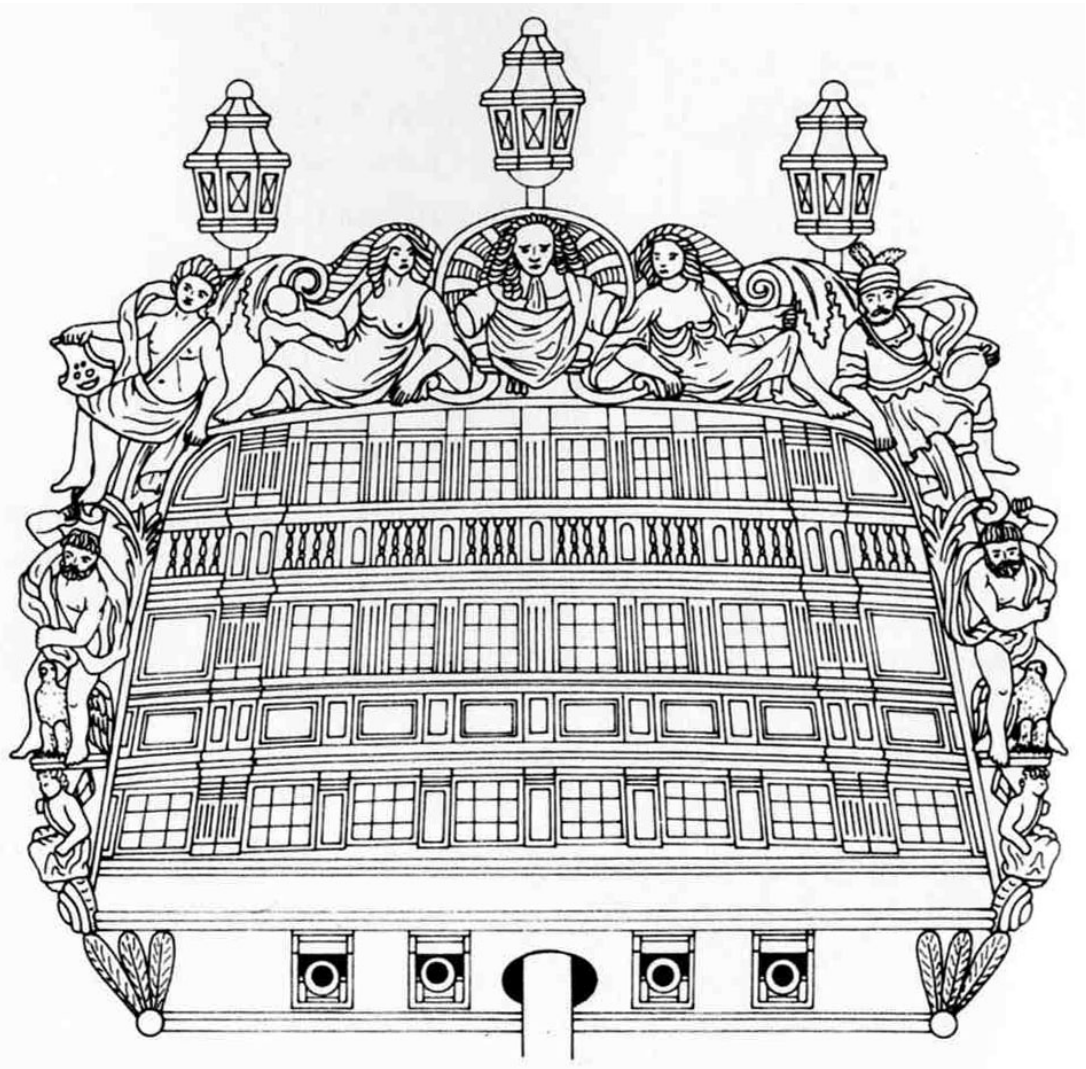


Figure 30. Stern of the *Royal George* (1715) (after zu Mondfeld 1989:108)

The draught of *Victory*, designed in 1759, shows one pair of terms on the quarter deck gallery and two pairs on the upper deck gallery; however, they are not true terms, as they have no pilaster finishing and the breast rail remains uninterrupted. They were likely intended as terms ending in the pilaster of the gallery rails. The model of *Victory* at Portsmouth differs from the draughts, showing only one pair on the quarter deck, which are true terms that are quite different in design from those in the draughts. This model also depicts only brackets in lieu of terms on the upper deck. The specification mentions eight terms, and from this it can be deduced that the word "terms" in this sense was not used in its true architectural meaning, but instead implied any figure or bracket in the appropriate position, the brackets against the quarter pieces counting as two pairs and the terms of brackets in wake of the fashion pieces as the other four (Laughton 2001:138).

When the *Princess Royal* was built in 1773, she was constructed with two terms on the quarter deck with no brackets against the quarter pieces and four terms on the upper deck which were quite large and rested on carved pedestals. Three 74-gun ships from 1770-1774 show a pair of terms each on the quarter-deck (true terms) reaching to the foot rail, but in one of them, the *Conqueror* of 1773, instead of human figures, birds are used (Laughton 2001:138).

The next stage of stern construction using terms can be seen in the *Atlas* of 1782. Rather than true terms, she was fitted with whole figures to the breast rail, one pair each on the upper deck and quarter deck. On each deck against the quarter piece and on the middle deck in wake of the fashion piece, she carries flowered brackets. The *Boyne*, a 98-gun ship built in 1790, carried merely flowered brackets, but the *Queen Charlotte*, a

first-rate also built in 1790, has whole figures of boys above the breast rail on the quarter deck, and large whole figures representing Justice and Fortitude to the foot rail on the upper deck (Laughton 2001:138-139).

When ornamentation was severely cut in 1796 the terms ceased to be a part of English shipbuilding practice. The *Victory* model of 1802 depicts only small floral ornamentation in place of the quarter-deck terms, with nothing ornamenting the lower deck. Although terms did make a slight comeback in the early 19th century, the *Nelson* of 1814 is the last of the English ships to be fitted with these features (Laughton 2001:139).

Toward the end of the century, the stern galleries were removed, causing the stern to become flatter. Captains had been complaining about their cabin arrangements for some time: the recessed screen bulkhead took up a great deal of space in the cabin, and was a considerable source of weakness, giving very little support to the deck above. With the installation of carronades on the poop, such a situation was no longer tolerable. There were some attempts to move the screen bulkhead aft, giving more room in the cabin, but this in no way helped to add structural strength. When the *Kent* and *Ajax* were built in 1795, a completely new type of stern was designed. It was closer to vertical than previously and formed a continuous surface without interruption by galleries. In contrast to the old stern type, it was rather angular, and was almost flat, broken only by the rows of stern windows. The carvings applied here were small and light, and large areas of the surface were left completely unadorned. This method was soon standardized by Admiralty Order and became common on all English men-of-war (Lavery 1983:68-69).

The Georgian style quickly replaced the Baroque style in decorating the stern galleries of English men-of-war in the late 18th century. The only portions of the ship that maintained the older Baroque style were the taffrail and its supporting members, and only the larger vessels had extensive carving in these areas. The Fifth- and Sixth-Rates were simply decorated with mouldings and pilaster work, with bits of gilding (or gilt paint more usually) worked in (Howard 1979:194).

It was not until 1771 that British warships began to have their names painted on their sterns, though the French had carried them much earlier and were a probable influence on English shipwrights. English ships began carrying their names painted on the second counter of the stern in 12-inch-high letters. By about 1780, the specifications were amended and shipwrights were instructed to make the letters 'as large as the counter will admit,' which remained the standard practice until the end of the era of sailing ships (Lavery 1983:65).

GUNPORTS IN THE 18th CENTURY

Gunport wreaths disappeared soon after the orders of 1703, and never reappeared on British warships. The sides of the ships were generally devoid of carvings, except for the strips of moulding which followed the lines of the planking and gunwales. The ends of the mouldings, at the breaks of the forecastle and quarterdeck, for example, were formed of scrollwork which broke the regular lines of the rest of the hull sides. Most ships were heavily painted with decorative friezes, usually filling the space between the channel wales and the top of the sides. The bulkheads of the poop, forecastle, and quarterdeck were less elaborate than in the past, but usually had some form of paneling

and moulding, sometimes embellished with gold paint. After about 1720 the shape of the ship's lanterns changed from spherical to hexagonal in cross-section, with flat sides, and tapered slightly toward the base (Lavery 1983:62).

As in the 17th century , the hinges connecting the gunport lids to the sides of the ship evolved as necessitated by changes in construction techniques. The evolution of these fittings from the first half of the 18th century is shown in Figure 31.

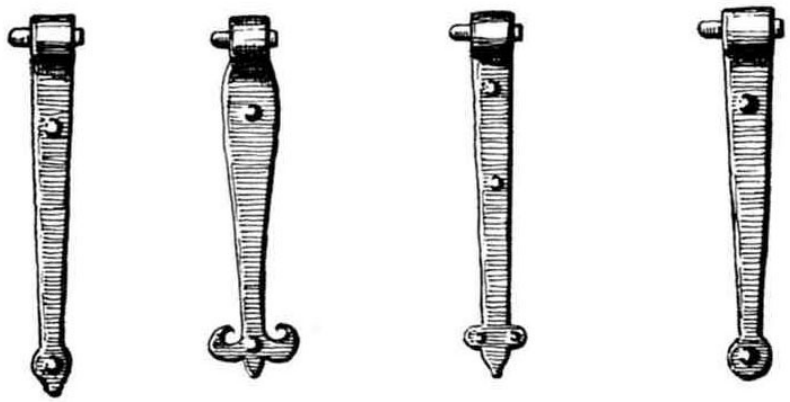


Figure 31. Port Lid Hinges from 18th Century Men-of-War (after Franklin 1989:31)

PAINTWORK IN THE 18th CENTURY

Paint was used more widely to decorate vessels in the 18th century than in any previous age. The raw materials necessary were available in sufficient quantities to allow the preservative properties of paint to be put to good use and they were usually mixed on the spot from the component pigments, oil, and thinner. English dockyards commonly used white lead, vermilion, red ochre, spruce (Prussian ochre), English ochre, verdigris (used for greens), calcined smalt (a cobalt compound used in blues) and blue-black. Gold leaf was also used, though sparingly, as were red lead, Venetian red, and Indian red. The Venetian and Indian reds would have been used for small decoration rather than mass coverage. A drab paint was made by mixing the leftovers together and was known, appropriately, as 'sad color'. It was used on the bottoms of boats, in the bilges, and on the faces of joints. In the 1780s whitewash began to be used on the interior parts of ships and its application gradually increased until it had, to a large extent, replaced the traditional red (Howard 1979:194).

According to an Admiralty Order of 1715, the sides of ships were to be 'painted of the usual color yellow, and the ground black, and that both inside and out to be of a plain color … except such parts of the head, stern, and galleries as are usually friezed…' The 'usual color yellow' implies a well-established tradition, and there is evidence that the Order was obeyed. Many contemporary pictures and models do not agree with what is stated in the Order, as they depict the sides 'bright', which means that they have been treated with turpentine or varnish. The upperworks of some models are a soft, light blue on which scrollwork and heraldic designs are painted in gilt, and others, although conforming to the Admiralty Order about plain colors, nevertheless have scrollwork in

gilt along their topsides. This divergence from the official scheme is suggests a certain that the artists took some amount of "artist's license' when decorating their models. After 1740, there is no doubt about individual variations in ships' paintwork, for there are references to ships with all-black sides (which would make them look smaller and, so it was hoped, induce the enemy to attack) and to others with the lowest wale and the topside black but the portions in between painted red.

The history of ship painting for the years 1740-1780 has never been investigated in detail but enough information has come to light to prove that the appearance of a fleet then was far from uniform. Official recognition of this fact was given in an Admiralty Order of 1780 that allowed ships to be painted black or yellow, and from then until some years after Trafalgar a fairly wide variety of styles was to be seen. A record of the appearance of the British ships at the Battle of the Nile in 1798, made by Col. Fawkes, who was present at the battle, is indicative of this "mottled" fleet (Howard 1979:193):

1. Plain yellow sides: *Alexander, Audacious, Bellerophon, Defence, Orion, Mutine*
2. Yellow sides with a black strake between the upper and lower rows of gunports: *Goliath, Leander, Majestic, Theseus, Swiftsure, Vanguard*
3. Yellow sides with two narrow black strakes between the upper and lower rows of gunports: *Culloden*

4. Red sides with a small yellow stripe: *Zealous*
5. Red sides with a black strake between the upper and lower rows of gunports: *Minotaur*

Eventually the realization that heavily ornamented warships were a handicap in sea battles must have hastened the steady reduction in the amount of artistic embellishment which had characterized the appearance of warships after 1700. Figures gradually gave way to merely ornamental patterns. More stress was laid on beadings, friezes, emblems, and cartouches. Figures were confined to smaller sculptures of dolphins, masks, and cherubs, while the only larger ones were those of the figurehead and coat of arms. This development was parallel to and linked with a reduction in the size of the after-castle, which naturally reduced the size of the surface on which ornaments could be applied. The process of elimination continued through the 18th century until all that was left in the way of ornamentation was the figurehead, coat of arms, and name symbols (Hanson 1968:122).

18th CENTURY CASE STUDY: *HMS VICTORY* (1765)

Victory of 1765 had a massive and complicated group figurehead (depicted in Figure 32), which was one of the last truly complicated group figureheads and is described in the Admiralty Specification to the carver as:

> A new large figure for the head cut in front at the upper part with a bust of His Majesty, the head adorned with laurels, and the body and shoulders worked in rich armor, and his George hanging before; under the breast is a rich shield partly supporting the bust and surrounded with four cherubs' heads and wings representing the four winds smiling, gently blowing our successes over the four quarters of the globe.
>
> On the starboard side of the head piece the principal figure is a large drapery figure representing Brittania, properly crowned sitting on a rich triumphal arch, and in one hand holding a spear enriched and the Union Flag hanging down from it, and with the other hand supporting the bust of His Majesty, with one foot trampling down Envy, Discord and Faction represented by a fiend or hag: at the same side above and behind Brittania is a large flying figure representing Peace crowning the figure Brittania with laurels and holding a branch of palms denoting peace and the happy consequences resulting from victory.
>
> At the back of the arch is the British lion trampling on very rich trophies of war, cut clear and open, and the arch on this side supported by two large figures, representing Europe and America properly dressed agreeable to the countries; and at the lower part of this side of the head piece is cut a young Genius, holding in one hand a bunch of flowers, belonging to a rich cornucopia or horn of plenty filled with fruit or flowers, cut clear, denoting abundance or plenty, which are the happy consequences arising from victory by bringing about a peace, and the Genius standing on contrast works and holding a branch of palms in the other hand is an emblem of peace, etc.
>
> On the larboard side of the head piece the principal figure is a large woman figure representing Victory, dressed in drapery and the head crowned with laurels cut clear and through, and with the other hand supporting the bust of His Majesty; with one foot trampling down rebellion, represented by a Hydra with five heads, the whole scaled and the heads worked very clear resting on rich contrast scrolls and foliage leaves. At the upper part behind the figure Victory is a flying figure representing Fame, with one hand holding a trumpet as sounding forth our victories, and in the other hand holding a branch of palms denoting peace attending on victory; and behind this figure is a rich shield with the royal

escutcheon worked in it proper, surrounded with laurels and crowned with an Imperial crown standing on rich trophies of war cut through and clear; and the arch on the side is supported by the figures of Asia and Africa, dressed and decorated to the natives of the countries, worked very clear and round, with scarves of drapery flying about and hanging down; and at the bottom of the head piece is a Genius, representing the mathematics or navigation, in one hand holding a pair of compasses and pointing to a globe in the other, denoting successes in all parts of the same, standing in a rich frame with brackets cut very clear and through, and worked quite round, with rich contrast works introduced in several other parts of the head piece, and other ornaments with trusses, etc., 24 feet long, 18 feet broad, and 12 feet thick.

A new large trail board cut in two parts, each part cut with three Sea Anticks or Tritons, two of them holding a shield enriched with the royal letters in it, enriched with foliage leaves; and the other boy on this side holding a banner or flag with the Union Cross in it etc., and the tails cut through and clear etc. Each 10 feet 3 inches long, 3 feet 2 inches broad, and 1 foot 2 inches thick.'(Norton 1976:75)

Figure 32. Carver's Model of Original Figure head from *HMS Victory* (after Norton 1976:116)

This specification is clear evidence of the psychological and folkloric methodology employed when decorating such a highly visible warship in an attempt to inspire both splendor and awe. It lays out the roles that each piece of the carving were expected to portray: four cherubs representing the four winds smiling; envy and discord represented by a hag; and a figure representing Peace herself crowning Brittania (representing, of course, the whole of England).

By the time of the construction of *Victory*, much of the reduction in carved work had already been necessitated due to the Admiralty Orders. The amount allocated for her carved work, including models of the figurehead and the ship, was £415. When she was rebuilt in 1803, her original figurehead was replaced by a simpler one, which was, in 1815, replaced with yet another version that still adorns her to the present day. The 1815 piece was quite similar to the 1803 figurehead (which was lost in the Battle of Trafalgar) and consists of the Royal Arms on an oval shield with scrolls, mottos, and two cherubs (McKay 2004:12).

CHAPTER V

THE 19th CENTURY

The story of figureheads on English men-of-war in the 19th century is one of decline and disappearance. Toward the middle of the century, this decline was marked by the very low standard of many of the carvings, which had been approved for decades by the Navy Board despite the lack of intricacy or skill involved in many. Lord Spencer's 1796 Order, likely intended to cause billet-heads to become the standard, had little effect. The great majority of new ships still went to sea with figureheads, though they were much reduced in size and elaboration. The controlling factor was the sum of money which was available for decoration. This change in allowable expenditure can easily be seen in the successive 19th century replacement figureheads of the 1765 *Victory*, discussed in the previous chapter.

In comparison with the ships of the previous century, English men-of-war of the 19th century were quite plain. The need to economize meant a limitation on ornamentation during the Napoleonic Wars and the years following them, and the shift in public taste from the Baroque and rococo styles to the more austere Regency were indicative of this change (Howard 1979:234).

Early in the 19t- century, the Lords of the Admiralty decided that drawing and painting were necessary requirements for a naval officer, and an instructor in the art was appointed to the Royal Naval College at Portsmouth. The first was Richard Livesay, who was succeeded in 1811 by John Christian Schetky, holding the office until 1836. A

special class was instituted at the College for ‘superior class of shipwright apprentices’ who were taught freehand drawing in the hope that it would assist them in designing figureheads (Norton 1976:91).

FIGUREHEADS IN THE 19th CENTURY

The early years of the 19th century saw a structural change that greatly affected the appearance of the ship’s bow. The old-fashioned beak-head bulkhead was replaced by a round bow (which had the advantages of being better able to withstand gunfire, of allowing more guns to bear forward, and of being much drier in a seaway) which was accompanied by a raising of the head and a general lightening of its construction (Howard 1979:235). The effect of this was to make the head rails less curved (they became nearly straight by 1840). The flatness of the head was accentuated by boarding in the space between a rail that ran from the back of the figurehead to a point at the level of the forecastle and the main rail of the head. Rails and trail boards became rudimentary or were discarded altogether, and the figurehead was only linked to the line of the hull in decorative terms by the paintwork, which was continued on to the cutwater and the head timber. In the big three-deckers of the first half of the century the resulting appearance was heavy and clumsy, but in ships with a lower freeboard, the profile was more graceful (Norton 1976:89).

Figureheads were greatly simplified in the 19th century, and only the largest ships were given anything more elaborate than a bust. Some First-Rates carried a bust with supporting figures or a suitable emblematic device in lieu of a bust. Smaller ships continued to be fitted with a simple scroll or fiddle-head ornament. The regulation

stipulating figureheads for only the largest ships was quite unpopular, however, and it was therefore relaxed to allow the first four Rates to have three-quarter length figures (Fifth- and Sixth-Rates still had to make do with the scroll or fiddle-head ornament). In the 1830s, the regulation was relaxed even further, so that all but the smallest ships were allowed an emblematic figure within the limits laid down. After 1828 a few of the largest ships were given full-length figures, but busts and half-figures were the norm, and they were usually intended as a portrait of the person after whom the ship was named. The drive to economize also affected the stern and quarter galleries, where carved figures vanished and were replaced by painted designs on pilaster-work (Howard 1979:235).

Despite Admiralty directives to reduce the amount of ornamentation, tradition and superstition had such deep roots in seafaring men that it was difficult to enforce these laws. Although the final aim was to eliminate figureheads entirely, the Royal Naval College at Portsmouth actually conducted art classes for the express purpose of introducing apprentices to the art of wood-carving. The Admiralty injunctions had one good result in that they reduced the unshapely groups of figureheads to more sensible proportions, and busts became common (Hanson 1968:123).

Smaller ships with clipper bows continued to be mounted with traditional figureheads. The last true figurehead to be carried on a major war vessel was that of the *Rodney*, a battleship built in 1884, which had a bust of the Admiral mounted upright, with his head just above the level of the forecastle deck, surrounded by scrollwork. Scrollwork continued to be seen in the fleet, but disappeared in the very first years of the 20th century (Thomas 1995:96).

PAINTWORK IN THE 19th CENTURY

In the 19th century, with so many Navy Board injunctions, men-of-war often had to depend upon paint for decoration. In the early 19th century the "Nelson fashion" became quite popular. It consisted of painting the hull in alternating bands of black and yellowish ochre following the lines of the decks rather than the sheer of the hull. The ochre-colored bands were at gunport level, and the gunports were painted black on the outside and ochre on the inside, so that when the lids were closed, the hull appeared checkered, with lines of black squares set in an ochre band between black bands. In the 1820s the ochre bands were replaced by white, with the port lids black on the outside and white on the inside. The next phase of this type of painting was to shift the lower edges of the black bands down, allowing them to fair with the top edges of the ports, and this is the style which remained in use until the end of the sailing warships. Inboard, the traditional red had been giving way to whitewash below decks since the 1780s. Above decks, the red had been superseded by ochre about 1800 and that, in turn, was supplanted by a soft green shade shortly afterward. Finally, in about 1830, the bulwarks inboard were painted white (Howard 1979:234).

CHAPTER VI

ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVIDENCE OF DECORATIVE WORK ABOARD SHIPS

Archaeological evidence of decorative work on English men-of-war is scant, especially from vessels which have been recovered from the sea. The detailing used along trailboards, catheads, and stern carving is typically exposed to the marine environment when ships are lost at sea, and the pieces rarely survive as well as larger hull fragments. Incidents of carved work have, however, been found aboard some English ships, and these will be discussed in this final chapter.

MARY ROSE

At the time of her sinking in July 1545 during an engagement with the French fleet, *Mary Rose* was a fully functional warship carrying over 400 sailors, soldiers, and gunners. She was one of the earliest great English warships, built during the reign of Henry VIII, and one of the first English ships capable of carrying a large complement of guns arranged behind gunports on several decks. Her rediscovery in the 1970s, after abortive salvage attempts in the 16th and 19th centuries, led to the successful recovery of her hull and its contents a few years later, allowing archaeologists to recovery, identify, and conserve nearly 26,000 artifacts and pieces of timber, most of which were in a good state of preservation (Marsden 2003:xi).

The wreck of the *Mary Rose* was first seen on June 10, 1836, by Henry Abbinett, a diver employed by five fishermen to disentangle their nets from a seabed obstruction (Bevan 1996:112). Two other divers were called to a site on the shore near Spithead by the fishermen, where they discovered an old bronze naval gun with an inscription referring to Henry VIII. One month later, a local newspaper reported that guns had been found resting atop a wreck that was so completely buried that divers were unable to secure themselves to it with ropes. During the 300 years that she had rested on the sea bottom, all of the exposed hull, mostly the port side and the castle structures, had been eroded away, leaving merely the buried hull. By August 12, 1836, the wreck was identified and made public in *Nautical Magazine* by Admiral Sir Frederick Maitland, who was Admiral Superintendent of Portsmouth Dockyard (Marsden 2003: 21).

It was not until 1971 that *Mary Rose* was rediscovered during a project initiated by a group of amateur divers investigating twelve historic shipwreck sites in the Solent, in the south of England. The Mary Rose Trust was created under the Protection of Wrecks Act in 1973, at which time key archaeological staff were appointed and project goals were outlined. In 1982, it was decided that the ship should be raised and preserved at the completion of the underwater excavations. The aim was to create a museum that would allow the ship to be displayed and her story told, while also enabling a full archaeological record of the ship's underside which would have been impossible while she was submerged in the silt (Marsden 2003:51).

The raising of the *Mary Rose* was the first self-sufficient archaeological recovery led by a charitable trust with no statutory government funding. While support was donated in kind by certain government-related entities such as the Science Museum and the Ministry of Defense, most of the support necessary for the project was from industry, businesses, and many individuals both in England and throughout the world (Marsden 2003:51). As it was the first project of its kind, the raising of the ship required complicated engineering expertise in coordination with the archaeologists in order to ascertain the best way of bringing her up. It was decided that she would be raised in one piece by special heavy lifting equipment once divers had removed all artifacts and reinforced the hull with a custom-built lifting cradle to maintain the integrity of the hull (Marsden 2003:56).

While *Mary Rose* yielded over 26,000 artifacts relating what shipboard life was like in the 16th century, she also provided insight into the design and construction of a Tudor warship. The work undertaken to raise and preserve the ship also contributed to the field of nautical archaeology as a whole by generating new methods of recovery and fund-raising efforts. Due to her position on the seabed, only a very small portion of the forward corner of the sterncastle survived, and this includes a support beam which is decorated with a carved ropework design, the only carved decorative element remaining on the vessel (Marsden 2003:107).

SWAN

The *Swan*, excavated off the Scottish coast near the town of Mull, has been an ongoing project for the past ten years. The ship has been dated to 1653, and was part of a task force dispatched to the Western Isles by Oliver Cromwell in an attempt to secure this entryway into Britain against possible Dutch incursion. Among the finds discovered on the wreck are carvings of oak which were portions of the ship. These carvings include a badge of the heir apparent to the English throne; two conjoining fragments of carved planking bearing the national symbols of Scotland and Ireland; a low-relief profile of a classical warrior (similar to those seen on other 17th century ships, including *Vasa* and *Kronan*); a winged cherub; and a scrolled carving which was likely either affixed to the taffrail, gallery area, or beakhead. The carvings of the heir apparent's badge (shown in Figure 33) and the national symbols of Scotland and Ireland (shown in Figure 34) are undoubtedly associated with a ship once owned by the Crown, and the Swan was built during the reign of Charles I, who claimed dominion over both countries. The carved work aboard the *Swan* is the first, and to date the only, of its kind to be discovered in British waters (Martin 1995:27)

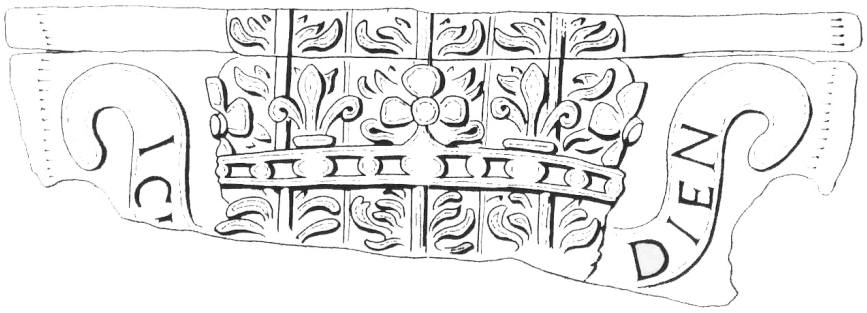


Figure 33. Badge of the Heir Apparent to the English Throne from the *Swan* (after Martin 1995:16)

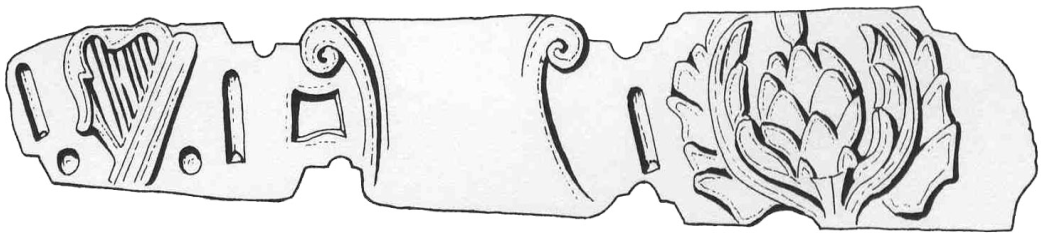


Figure 34. Carved Planking Bearing the National Symbols of Ireland and Scotland from the *Swan* (after Martin 1995:16)

HMS *COLOSSUS*

HMS *Colossus* was a 74-gun third rate ship-of-the-line built at Gravesend and launched in 1787. Her last naval engagement was at the Battle of Cape St Vincent (1797), during the course of which she was badly damaged. In consequence, she was used as a store ship, supplying provisions and equipment for the fleet under Nelson's control in the Mediterranean (Nelson had been promoted to the post of rear admiral after the Battle of Cape St Vincent). The Battle of the Nile in August 1798 was a major strategic victory for the British and provided a welcome breathing space. The *Colossus* was stripped of her stores to repair the serving ships and ordered to return to England, carrying wounded from the battle, along with prize items and part of a collection of Greek antiquities amassed by Sir William Hamilton.

The *Colossus* approached the Channel in December 1798 and Captain Murray decided to take anchorage in the Isles of Scilly to await favorable winds. On 10 December, the main anchor cable parted in the gale and the ship dragged her remaining anchors to come aground on Southward Well Rocks. Amazingly, all but one of her crew

survived the incident, though the wounded were to spend an uncomfortable night lashed to the rigging as waves washed over the ship. The *Colossus* was subject to extensive salvage in the year following her wrecking, before she finally broke up.

In 1972, the bow section of the ship was located by Mark Groves and Slim McDonald and the site was designated under the British Protection of Wrecks Act in 1975. Investigation took place by a team lead by Roland Morris, a commercial salvor, funded by the British Museum. More than 30,000 sherds of Greek pottery had been recovered by the time the site was de-designated in 1984. Most of this pottery is now in the British Museum. Individual vases are currently being painstakingly reconstructed, using detailed drawings of the vases prepared by artists before the collection left Italy.

After losing its designated status, the site and surrounding area were subject to numerous searches by a number of different divers. In 1998, local diver Todd Stevens located scattered wreck material some distance from the original site including part of a gun carriage with 'Colossus 32lb' carved into it. After this other finds were made by local salvage diver Mac Mace and others. On closer inspection, this proved to be almost the whole port side of the ship from forward of the mainmast to the stern, and from the upper deck gun ports to the turn of the bilge. Another local diver identified a carving in the area of the stern and, after licensed excavation, this proved to be a substantial piece of the port quarter decoration, close to its original position on the hull. Finally, the *Colossus* had become important in her own right as a shipwreck, and was re-designated as a protected wreck.

Excavation of a piece of wood protruding from the seabed revealed a large carving from the heavily-ornamented stern. The figure (shown in Figures 35 and 36) would originally have been located on the upper port side of the stern and immediately to the port side of the quarter piece. It measures 3.30 meters long overall, it represents a Roman warrior with a raised arm that was attached to a heavily decorated arched frame of a window in the captain's cabin. He is covered in fish-scale armor, holding aloft a wreath of laurels. The figure was in an exceptionally good state of preservation, revealing traces of the original paint. At present, the carving is undergoing conservation at the Mary Rose Archaeological Services in Portsmouth, England (Camidge, 2002:21).

Figure 35. Warrior from the Stern of HMS *Colossus* (Courtesy Kevin Camidge, Cornwall and Isles of Scilly Marine Archaeological Services)

Figure 36. Detail of Face of Warrior from the Stern of HMS *Colossus* (Courtesy Kevin Camidge, Cornwall and Isles of Scilly Marine Archaeological Services)

CHAPTER VII

CONCLUSIONS

By researching primary sources such as drawings, paintings, and models, the evolution of decoration on English men-of-war can be traced through the four major centuries of its existence. From the earliest decorations on English ships sprang the profuse embellishment which reached its height in the 17th century and virtually became an art form unto itself. Over the centuries, many of the changes in the decoration of warships were due to technological innovations in ship construction providing an ever-changing 'canvas' for this artistic work.

The archaeological evidence pertaining to such shipboard decoration is scant, and in order to trace the evolution of such work a number of types of sources must necessarily be compiled into one corpus of information. All of the archaeological, written, and iconographic sources available have been utilized to prepare in this thesis what will hopefully provide an aid to future researchers when trying to ascertain the date and type of vessel being studied.

In conjunction with a study of the construction details, the information provided in this thesis will assist archaeologists when trying to successfully date remnants of vessels constructed in English shipyards from the 16th to the 19th centuries. Although often these decorative elements do not survive well in the archaeological record, when they do, they can be a significant source of information relating to the date and manufacture of the vessel in question.

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Arcading	A series of arches used in construction
Beak	A small platform at the fore part of the upper deck
Beakhead	A small platform at the fore part of the upper deck of a vessel, which contains the water closets of the crew
Beakhead Bulkhead	Bulkhead terminating just above the beakhead
Belfry	The framing on which a bell is suspended
Bowsprit	A large boom or mast which projects over the bow to carry sail forward
Broadside	The side of a ship above the water, or with the side of the vessel turned fully forward
Bulkhead	Certain partitions or walls between two decks
Buttocks	The traces formed by the intersections of longitudinal vertical planes parallel to the central longitudinal vertical plane of the ship, with the forward and after surface of the ship's hull
Carvel	Ship with broad bows, a high and narrow poop deck, four masts, and lateen sails
Cathead	Each of two strong short beams of timber which project almost horizontally over the bow on each side of the bowsprit
Chase Ports	The ports at the bows, and through the stern of the ship
Cheeks	Pieces of timber on the ship's bow to secure the beakhead
Counters	An arch or vault whose upper-part is terminated by the bottom of the *stern*, and the lower-part by the wing-transom and buttock
Clipper Bow	A bow where the stem has a forward curve and the sides have an exaggerated outward flair
Cutwater	The forward edge of the stem which divides the water before it reaches the bow

Fashion Pieces	The aft-most or hind-most timbers of a ship which terminate the breadth and form the shape of the stern
Forecastle	A short raised deck at the fore end of the ship, originally for archers to shoot arrows into enemy vessels
Full-Rigged Ship	A ship that is square rigged on all (three or more) masts plus a gaff sail on the mizzen mast
Galleas	A large galley, having some features of the galleon, as broadside guns
Gunport	A hole, sometimes with an opening shutter, for a cannon to fire through
Half-Deck	A deck extending from the mainmast aft, between the smaller quarterdeck and the upper or main deck
Hancing Pieces	A “hance” is a shoulder or haunch, and in naval architecture means the step made by the drop of the rail at the top of the ship’s side to a lower level.
Hawseholes	Two cylindrical holes in he bow of a ship for the anchor cable to run through
Head	The fore part of the ship
Keel	The principal piece of timber in a ship, which is usually first laid on the blocks in building
Knee	A piece of timber shaped in a right angle, often naturally so, that is used to secure parts of a ship together, especially connecting beams and timbers
Lapstrake	Having the external planks or plates overlapping
Mullions	A slender vertical member that forms a division between units of a window, door, or screen
Pilaster	An upright architectural member that is rectangular in plan and is structurally a pier but architecturally treated as a column
Planksheer	The plank fitted horizontally on top of the sheerstrake in wooden vessels
Poop Deck	A short, raised aftermost deck of a ship, above the quarterdeck

Quarterdeck	A smaller deck above the halfdeck, covering about a quarter of the ship
Rail	Any of the narrow ornamental planks on the upperworks of the ship
Rates	Classification of warships based on tonnage and armament, ranging from First to Sixth Rate
Stem	A circular piece of timber into which the two sides of a ship are united at the fore end
Stemhead	The head or upper end of the stem
Stempost	The bow frame forming the apex of the triangular intersection of the forward sides of a ship
Sternpost	A long straight piece of timber erected on the extremity of the keel, to sustain the rudder, and terminate the aft end of the ship
Taffrail	The upper part of a ship's stern, being a curved piece of wood
Term	A quadrangular pillar often tapering downward and adorned on the top with the figure of a head or the upper part of the body
Trailboard	Pieces of carved wood which decorate both sides of a ship. They get their name from their position on the ships. They "trail" along the sides of a ship from the figurehead along either side of the bow, or very front of the ship
Upperworks	A general name given to all that part of a ship which is above the surface of the water when she is properly balanced for a sea-voyage
Waist	The middle part of the upper deck of a ship, between the quarterdeck and the forecastle
Wale	A thick strake of planking, or a belt of thick planking strakes, located along the side of a vessel for girding, protecting, and stiffening the outer hull.
Wing	A continuing outward lateral projection of a stern transom beyond the side of the hull

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