

This article was downloaded by: [University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign]  
On: 12 March 2015, At: 02:11  
Publisher: Routledge  
Informa Ltd Registered in England and Wales Registered Number: 1072954  
Registered office: Mortimer House, 37-41 Mortimer Street, London W1T 3JH,  
UK



## The Mariner's Mirror

Publication details, including instructions for authors and subscription information:

<http://www.tandfonline.com/loi/rmir20>

### MEDIAEVAL SHIPS

H. H. Brindley

Published online: 22 Mar 2013.

To cite this article: H. H. Brindley (1912) MEDIAEVAL SHIPS, *The Mariner's Mirror*, 2:8, 239-243, DOI: [10.1080/00253359.1912.10654621](https://doi.org/10.1080/00253359.1912.10654621)

To link to this article: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/00253359.1912.10654621>

PLEASE SCROLL DOWN FOR ARTICLE

Taylor & Francis makes every effort to ensure the accuracy of all the information (the "Content") contained in the publications on our platform. However, Taylor & Francis, our agents, and our licensors make no representations or warranties whatsoever as to the accuracy, completeness, or suitability for any purpose of the Content. Any opinions and views expressed in this publication are the opinions and views of the authors, and are not the views of or endorsed by Taylor & Francis. The accuracy of the Content should not be relied upon and should be independently verified with primary sources of information. Taylor and Francis shall not be liable for any losses, actions, claims, proceedings, demands, costs, expenses, damages, and other liabilities whatsoever or howsoever caused arising directly or indirectly in connection with, in relation to or arising out of the use of the Content.

This article may be used for research, teaching, and private study purposes. Any substantial or systematic reproduction, redistribution, reselling, loan, sub-licensing, systematic supply, or distribution in any form to anyone is

expressly forbidden. Terms & Conditions of access and use can be found at <http://www.tandfonline.com/page/terms-and-conditions>

## MEDIÆVAL SHIPS.

No. VI.—REEFING GEAR (Pt. iii.)

By H. H. BRINDLEY.

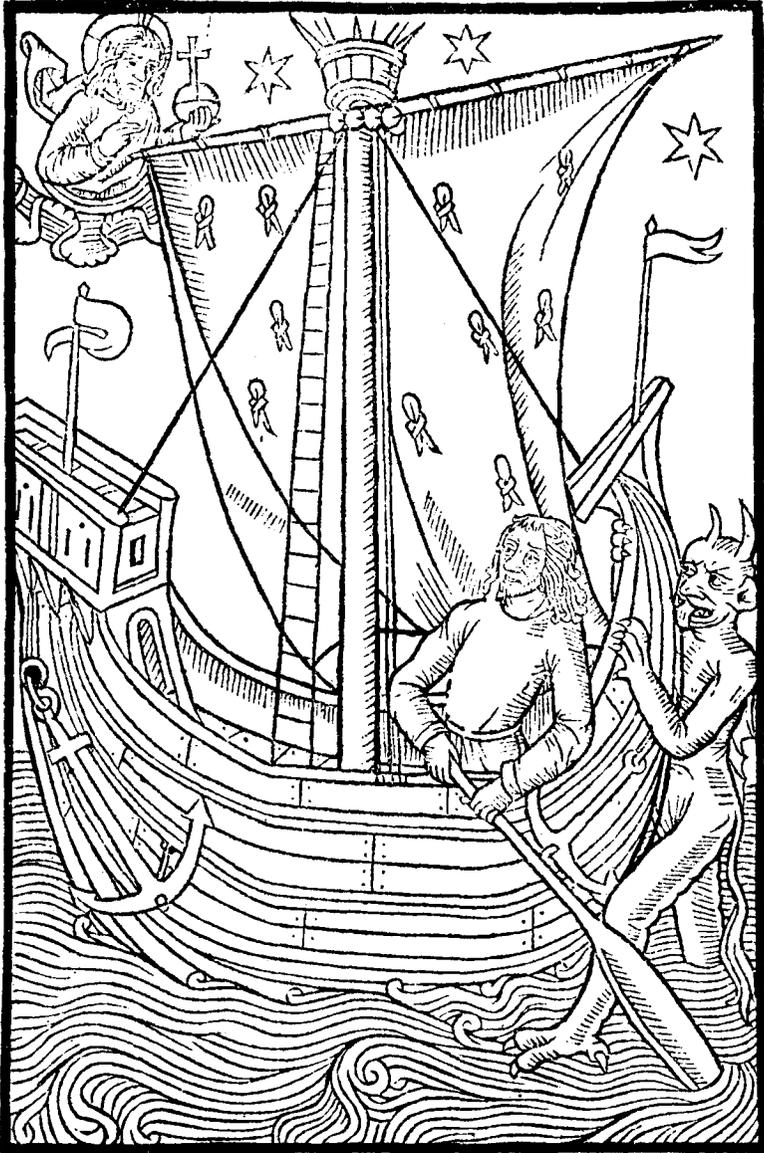
IN THE MARINER'S MIRROR for June, 1912, p. 171, I referred to a miniature in MS. possessed by the Bibliothèque Nationale at Paris, known to me at the time only by a woodcut reproduction published in 1884, as probably giving a representation of reef-points by a mediæval artist. Through the kindness of Dr. Jules Sottas I have lately obtained a photograph of this miniature, and it will be seen from the reproduction illustrating this article that the sail bears what I think may be fairly regarded as reef-points. The miniature, for the tracing of which I am indebted to Mr. P. B. M. Allan of Clare College, Cambridge, is on f.7 of MS. Français 2643, which appears in the "Catalogue des manuscrits français," tome I., ancien fonds, 1868, p. 438, as "Chroniques sire Jehan Froissart : commençant par 'Afin que nobles faitz d'armes et honnourables advvenues par les guerres de France et d'Angleterre,' et finissant par, 'ne retourne pour telz choses sous la paine d'estre noyez, car autant de menaiges qui vendront pour ceste chose, nous les getterons en Mouse'" (vêlin, XV. siècle). The miniature represents the arrival at Dover of King Edward II. and his Queen, Isabel of France, in 1307.

The reef-points are in four rows, which are evenly arranged in the upper half of the sail, which resembles the disposition of the reef-points in the seal of Rye ("M.M.," May, 1912, Fig. 4, opp. p. 132) and in the miniature in Bodl. MS. Misc. 264 ("M.M.," June, 1912, Fig. 8, opp. p. 167), both of which are also works of the XVth century. The reef-points in the French MS. agree also with those of the two examples just referred to in being single, and like them too, the sail carries no suggestion of reef-bands. This is of interest, as in representations of the previous century we find several instances of what seem to be reef-bands, and they appear again in the early part of the XVIth century (see table on p. 172 of "M. M.," June, 1912.) The photograph shows that the whole of the sail is set, and not with its upper

part furled to the yard, as I thought possibly the case from an examination of the woodcut reproduction. The surmise on p. 171 of the "M. M." for June should therefore be disregarded.

The hull of the Royal ship and those of the others in the miniature are much like those of other representations of the XVth century, but there are one or two features which deserve notice. The spar of square section looking rather like a bowsprit under the fore-stage of the Royal ship is, I think, unusual. The fore-stay in the form of a crowfoot, with part of it let into the hull like a kind of forward shroud, is an arrangement of standing rigging I do not recollect having seen in any other picture. One is inclined to think that this "shroud" is really a shroud shifted forward so as to allow an uninterrupted view of the tapestry hanging over the gunwale. The duplication of the forward hawse-holes, their diminutive size, the omission of lifts and braces, the placing of the starboard yard arm on the wrong side of the mast, the obvious faults in the shrouds which bear ratlines, and the absence of a rudder, are features which do not inspire us with confidence in the artist's knowledge of a ship, or at least convince us that his first thought was to give us a clear view of the personages she carries. The grappling hooks on the yard, and the fitting of stays to what seems only a flag topmast are of interest, as is also the fore-mast, a spar which none of the other ships seem to carry. It is unfortunate that the date of the MS. seems not to have been identified more closely than to its century. On the whole the miniature suggests the first half of the XVth century. Save for its marked forward rake, the small foremast reminds us of a Venetian *bragozzi*. Did the foremast come into use in northern waters in this form? One of the puzzles offered by XVth century craft is how the one-masted ship so characteristic of the Middle Ages, at least in Northern Europe, passed into the three-master of the last decades of the XVth century. Were two-masted vessels ever common in the Middle Ages outside the Mediterranean, and for how long? It is beyond the scope of this article to attempt a discussion of the subject, but I venture to suggest the importance of noting all representations of two-masters executed in the XIVth and XVth centuries. They appear not to be numerous.

The seaman standing on the fore-stage of the Royal ship is apparently getting in the foresail, perhaps he is intended to be brailing it up. He is hauling with both hands, and it is of interest that he has taken a couple of turns about his wrists with the fall of the rope.



The ship we see just to the left of the sail of the Royal ship carries an ornamental wind vane above her pennon. This is, I think, a very unusual fitting in pictures of mediæval craft.

In the trader sketched by Mr. Morton Nance from a miniature in MS. Français 2810 (Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris), executed in the later part of the XIVth century ("M. M.," June, 1912, p. 174), we have, I think another representation of early reef-points. Mr. Nance (*op. cit.* p. 175) leaves it an open question as to whether reef-points or the lacings of a bonnet are included. They seem too high up on the sail to be the latter, though in this conclusion one has to suppose the artist put them in the right place. May not the line across the sail lower down be intended for the division between "corps" and bonnet? If the fittings are reef-points, they are of the "double" type with a "knot" where they are made fast to the sail, which I described in the "M. M." for May, p. 133, and June, p. 169. As the miniature is of the XIVth century it is earlier than any of the examples I quoted, though Harl. MS. 1319, was written perhaps as early as 1399. As in the ships in one of the miniatures therein, a reef-band seems to be shown in the ship in MS. Français 2810. It may be noted that the Harl. MS. is also French work. No great stress can, however, be laid on this, as in the other Harleian miniature ("M. M.," May, 1912, Fig. 7, *opp.* p. 133), we see no sign of reef-bands.

The following table (p.243) summarises the mediæval and early XVIth century representations of what I am inclined to believe are reef-points rather than anything else. The seal of Dublin will be referred to in a future article.

The accompanying reproduction of "the man in the ship" cut from the "Compost et Kalendrier des Bergiers," Paris, 1493, may interest readers of the "M. M." as a comparison with an English copy of *c.* 1580 reproduced on p. 167 of the June number. As mentioned there, the 1493 edition is the earliest known (the illustration is a photograph of the cut from the July reprint by Guiot Marchant of his first issue of the "Compost," in May, 1493, and was made from the copy in the British Museum). It will be seen that the English cut lacks the starboard upper reef-point and the *dardons* in the top are treated more conventionally, so that they resemble the rays of a crown. Beyond these the differences are minor ones. In the English cut the waves are treated with much less detail and here and there shading which we see in the original is omitted.

Date.	Example.	Side of sail seen.	Position on sail.	Number of rows.	Single or double.	Reef-bands:
XII century 1297	La Rochelle seal	aft	lower half	three	single	present
XIII century	Dublin City seal	fore	all over	three	single	present
	Hastings seal	aft	lower two-thirds	three	single	present
XIV century (late)	MS. français 2810, in Bibliothèque Nationale	fore	upper half	one	double	present (probably)
1391	Earl of Rutland's seal	fore	all over	three	mostly single	none
	Harleian MS. 1319, fol. 14, miniature	aft	all over	three	double	present in one ship
1399-1400	Harleian MS. 1319, fo 18, miniature	fore	near head and near foot	two	double	none
1410-1420	Bodleian MS. Misc. 254, fol. 218, miniature	fore	upper two-thirds or all over	two, three and ? four	single	none
XV century	Rye seal	fore	all over	three	single	none
XV century	MS. français 2643 fol. 7, in Bibliothèque Nationale	aft	upper half	three, or perhaps four	single	none
1465	Thaxted Church window	aft	all over	roughly, six	single	none
1485-1493 (very possibly)	Cottonian MS. Julius E. iv. Art. 6, drawings		doubtful, if reef-points are present.			
1493	"Compost et Calendrier des Bergiers" (Paris), woodcut	aft	all over	roughly, four	double	none
1505 (?)	"Kalendrier des Bergiers (Rouen), woodcut	aft	middle	one	double	present
1523	Villequier Church window	aft	middle	one	double	none
1528	Vatteville Church window	aft	upper half	two	double	present (probably)