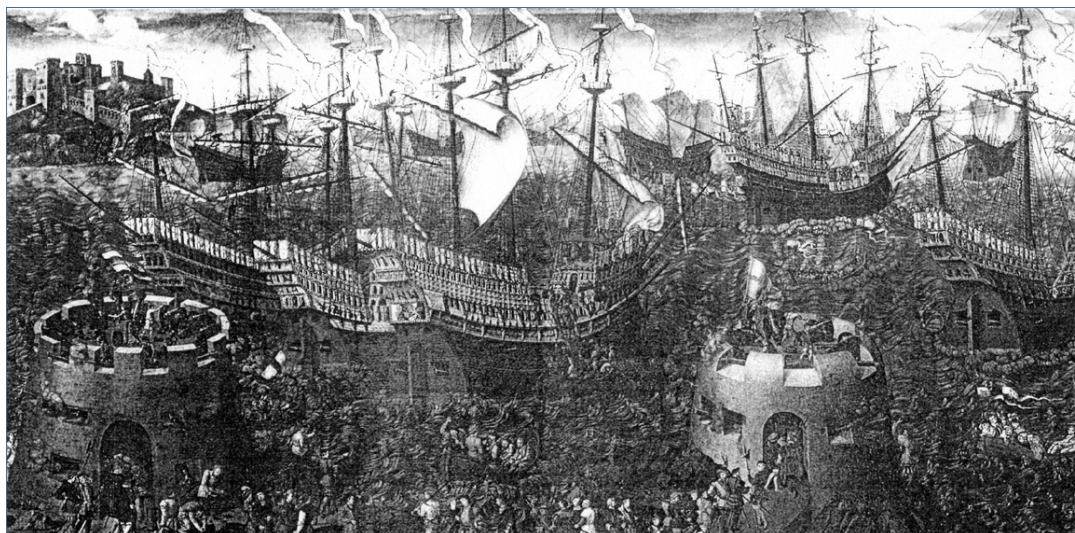


Tudor Flags

Professor David Loades PhD FRHS FSA



1.

We do not have the text of Professor Loades presentation, but Rob Raeside has kindly supplied the following precis:

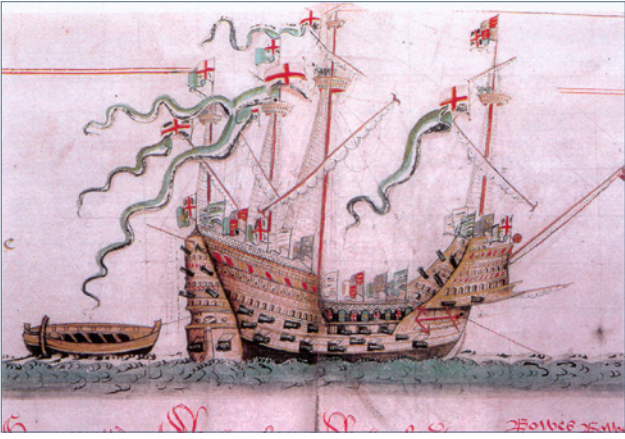
The presentation mainly concerned flags used at sea by Henry VIII's navy. Such flags served three purposes - decoration, identification, and information transfer. Decorative flags were used to glorify the prince, and were not used during rough weather or in battle. In order to understand the use of flags in battle in the early 16th Century, it must be noted that the concept of the sea battle was still being developed. Before the invention of guns on board, galleys fought mainly by ramming each other. With the appearance of guns in the early 15th Century, galleys began to fight as individual ships, although such battling was rare outside coastal waters or more sheltered seas like the Mediterranean. Sailing ships in use up to the late 16th Century were clumsy, and major sea battles were more by accident than by design. Sea battles were essentially land-type battles, fought at sea. Ships therefore copied land-based forces, and carried the arms of the travellers. To demonstrate the decoration used by Henry VIII's ships, consider the record of purchase of flags for *Grace à Dieu*, his new flagship, in 1514. It was decorated with a 51 yard green and white streamer, 3 20 yard streamers, 3 5.5-yard long streamers, 10 3-yard long streamers, 10 St. George cross flags, and the image of the lion, the dragon and the greyhound (all provided at a cost of £112 19/8d). (See image above for an idea of the appearance of the streamer.) Some flags at this time were mostly streamers or banners, and some were made in metal. Special flags were made in fine wool or silk and embroidered.

At this time, ships were made or commandeered as needed for battle. After the battle, most ships reverted to the previous tasks. After the French War of 1512-14, Henry retained a fleet of 15 ships, essentially the beginning of the English navy. By 1545, the Naval Council existed with about 60 ships. Even in a smaller fleet, it was necessary to denote which ship carried the admiral, and this was accomplished by flying the St. George Cross flag from the mizzen mast. With the introduction of a larger fleet, flags became used as signals of the squadron to which the ship belonged, initially by flying a flag on either the foremast, the top mast, or the mizzen mast. Arms were used abundantly to identify who was on board.

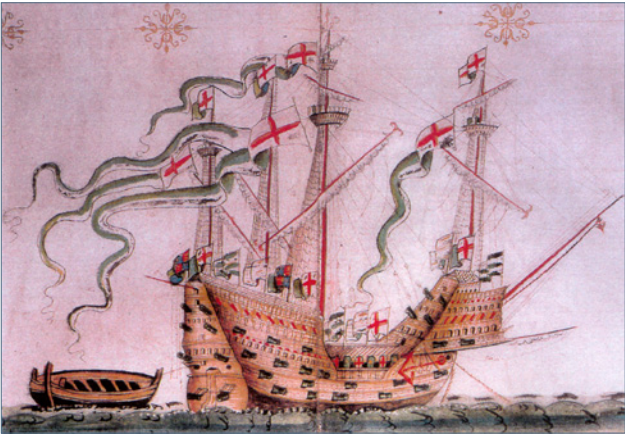
Henry VIII died in 1547, and by 1588, only the royal arms, the national flags, and the squadron ensigns (by this time red, blue and white flags, for the first, second and third squadrons respectively) were used.



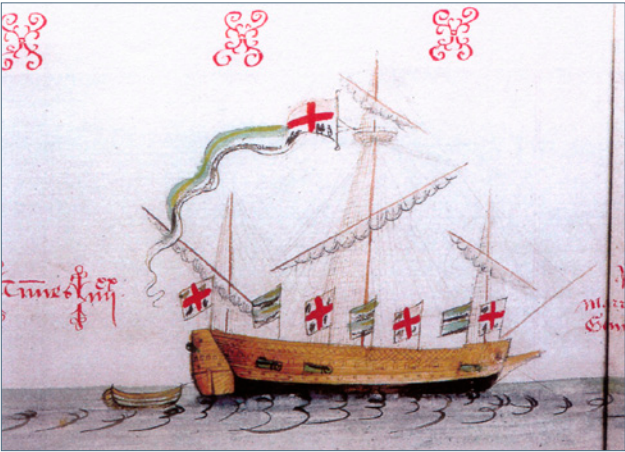
2.



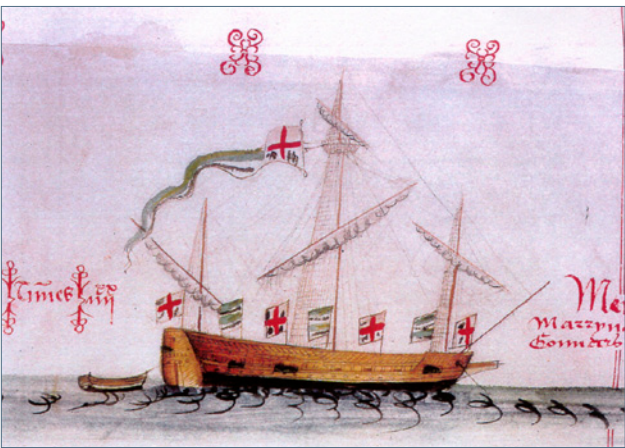
3a.



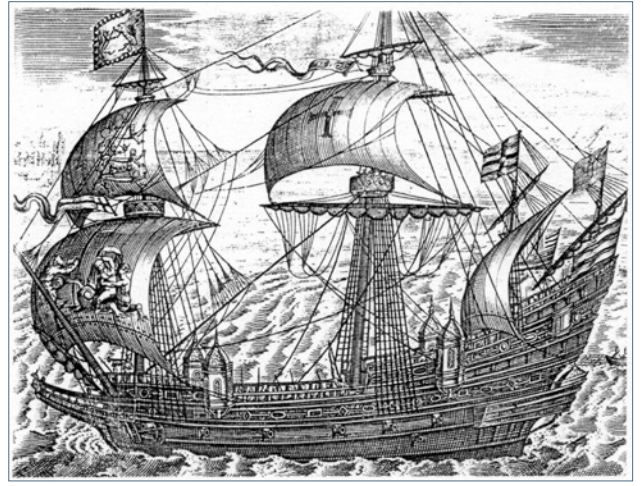
3b.



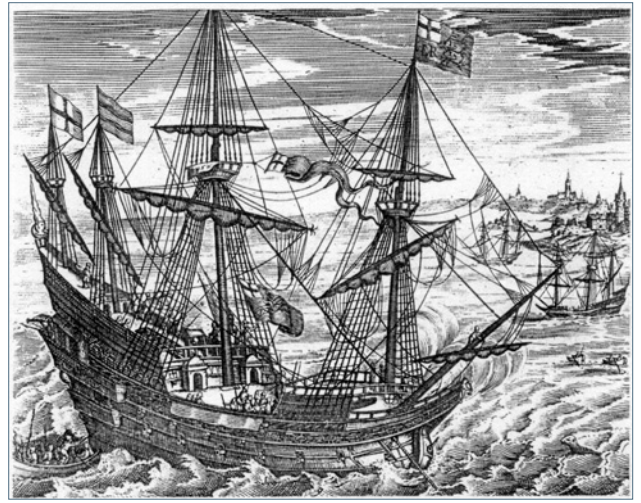
4a.



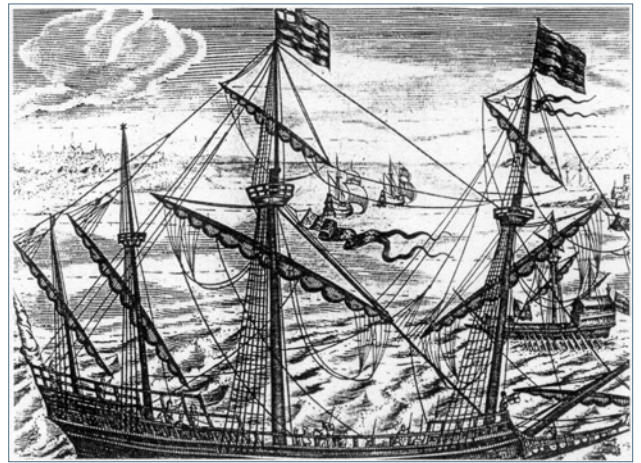
4b.



5a.



5b.



5c.



● Charles, Lord Howard of Effingham, Admiral of the Fleet, commander of the *Ark Royal*.



● Francis Drake, commander of the *Revenge*.



● Sir William Wynter was with Howard on the *Ark Royal*.



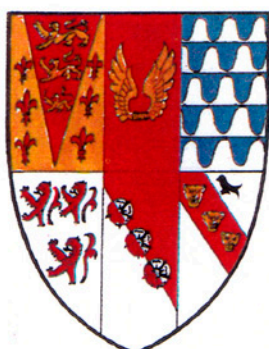
● Sir Martin Frobisher was on the *Victory* with Lord Henry Seymour.



● Sir Henry Palmer commanded the *Rainbow*.



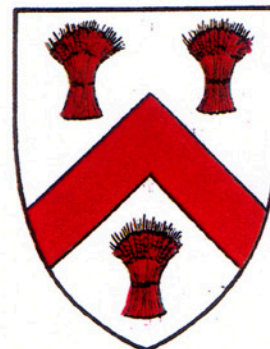
● The Fenner William and Thomas commanded the *Aid* and the *Nonpareil*, respectively.



● Lord Henry Seymour.



● Sir John Hawkins.



● Lord Edmund Sheffield.

6.

