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Ship Types in the Age of Sail—3 Masts

Three mast ships were the work horses of the trans-Atlantic trade. They were generally larger than most two-mast ships and could carry more cargo, which made them more economical.



Full-rigged or Square-rigged Ship

The term full-rigged is a generic term that describes any ship (2 or more masts) on which the primary driving sails are carried on horizontal spars which are perpendicular, or square, to the keel of the vessel and to the masts.

3 Masted Barque

The barque has square-rigged sails on the foremast and mainmast. The 3rd or mizzen mast has a fore and aft rig. The advantage of this rig is that fewer men are required and no top men.



Barquentine

The barquentine has square-rigged sails on the foremast only. The mainmast and mizzen are rigged fore and aft. This further reduces the crew requirements and reduces the ship operating costs.

3 Masted Schooner

The 3 masted schooner works the same as other schooners. All the sails are rigged fore and aft, which minimizes the requirements for crew. On a 3-mast schooner 12-15 crew are normal, whereas 25-45 are needed on a square-rigged ship of comparable cargo carrying capacity. There are a number of different sail configurations for the schooner.

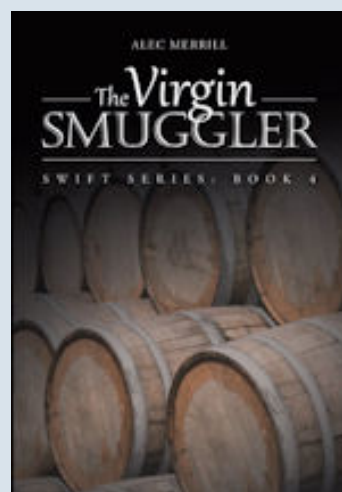


Frigate

A frigate is a square-rigged warship that generally carries between 24-40 cannon on a single deck. After the 1746 conventions, British frigates required a minimum of 28 cannon. Frigates were more lightly constructed than a ship-of-the-line and were primarily employed in scouting, patrolling and escort.



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