[**count de monet**](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/profile/6467-count-de-monet/)

* Ship's Master
* 
* 
* Member
* 125 posts
* Location:st. louis, mo.
* Interests:sailing, aircooled vw's,woodworking, airbrush painting,makin' stuff, photography.....

([IP: 70.242.131.165](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/modcp/ip-tools/&ip=70.242.131.165)) ·

[Posted March 30, 2008](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/12587-grommets-in-period-tents/&do=findComment&comment=309233) · [Report post](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/12587-grommets-in-period-tents/&do=reportComment&comment=309233)

are grommets ( you know, the brass type ) period for tents ??

seriously considering making our tent. are grommets period or did they use ties ??



* [Quote](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/12587-grommets-in-period-tents/)
* [Edit](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/12587-grommets-in-period-tents/&do=edit)

[**michaelsbagley**](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/profile/3724-michaelsbagley/)

* Smells Like Wet Sheep
* 
* 
* Moderator
* 2,548 posts
* Gender:Male
* Location:Columbus, Ohio
* Interests:Mostly into GAoP, but starting to develop more Buccaneer era stuff for re-enacting as well. Generally I do re-enact both piratical/nautical and other impressions from the period. I am focusing on more "common" impressions from the period (i.e. average sailor/pirate, rank and file Red Coat, early Colonial huntsman, etc.)

([IP: 99.168.74.246](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/modcp/ip-tools/&ip=99.168.74.246)) · · 

[Posted March 31, 2008](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/12587-grommets-in-period-tents/&do=findComment&comment=309322) · [Report post](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/12587-grommets-in-period-tents/&do=reportComment&comment=309322)

I've not seen any proof against the existence of metal grommits or eyelets.... But I have not seen any evidence for them either. 

As far as I know eyelets were used (speaking in general here, not about tents), but period eyelets were sewn, kind of like a buttonhole, but round. There is really not much evidence about tents of the period at all. I've found written references to them, but no good descriptions or details pictures, so for tents your guess is as good as anyones.

To answer your question a bit more directly, I would suggest and advise using ties over grommits. 

* [Quote](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/12587-grommets-in-period-tents/)
* [Edit](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/12587-grommets-in-period-tents/&do=editComment&comment=309322)
* [Options](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/12587-grommets-in-period-tents/#elControls_309322_menu)

[**Capt. Sterling**](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/profile/2648-capt-sterling/)

* Sticky Fingers Sterling Needs a New Hat
* 
* 
* Member
* 10,302 posts
* Gender:Pyrate Hunter
* Location:here
* Interests:Killing pirates, haven't met one yet worth keeping alive....

([IP: 76.1.128.99](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/modcp/ip-tools/&ip=76.1.128.99)) · · 

[Posted March 31, 2008](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/12587-grommets-in-period-tents/&do=findComment&comment=309324) · [Report post](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/12587-grommets-in-period-tents/&do=reportComment&comment=309324)

Perhaps a call to some of the better and supposedly more reliable tent makers, just to see what they may say.... such as Tentsmiths and Panther Primitives... they make claim to producing some of the more accurate pieces. I believe Tentsmiths has come out with one from the mid-to late 17th century.

* [Quote](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/12587-grommets-in-period-tents/)
* [Edit](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/12587-grommets-in-period-tents/&do=editComment&comment=309324)
* [Options](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/12587-grommets-in-period-tents/#elControls_309324_menu)

[**Capt. Bo of the WTF co.**](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/profile/2748-capt-bo-of-the-wtf-co/)

* Scourge o' the 7 Seas
* 
* 
* Member
* 2,339 posts
* Gender:Male
* Location:Spanish Louisiana - on the river Osage
* Interests:Many and varied.

([IP: 64.85.221.145](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/modcp/ip-tools/&ip=64.85.221.145)) · · 

[Posted March 31, 2008](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/12587-grommets-in-period-tents/&do=findComment&comment=309325) · [Report post](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/12587-grommets-in-period-tents/&do=reportComment&comment=309325)

"The Arts of the Sailor" is a 1950's yachtsman's book. In there is a very good description of non-metalic grommets and how to make them. I would suggest contacting Tentsmiths or Panther Primitives or RK lodges for research reference to period tents. These three companies make tentage for the movie industry and have extensive knowledge of the topic.

Bo

* [Quote](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/12587-grommets-in-period-tents/)
* [Edit](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/12587-grommets-in-period-tents/&do=editComment&comment=309325)
* [Options](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/12587-grommets-in-period-tents/#elControls_309325_menu)

[**Capn\_Enigma**](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/profile/139-capn_enigma/)

* Plunderer
* 
* 
* Member
* 432 posts

([IP: 88.70.191.232](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/modcp/ip-tools/&ip=88.70.191.232)) · · 

[Posted March 31, 2008](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/12587-grommets-in-period-tents/&do=findComment&comment=309376) (edited) · [Report post](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/12587-grommets-in-period-tents/&do=reportComment&comment=309376)

 Capt. Bo of the WTF co. said:

These three companies make tentage for the movie industry and have extensive knowledge of the topic.

Bo

Is that the same movie industry that puts leather tricorns, knee- high boots and hair beadwork on fictional Captains? Great source for authenticity, then. 

**Edited March 31, 2008 by Capn\_Enigma**

* [Quote](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/12587-grommets-in-period-tents/)
* [Edit](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/12587-grommets-in-period-tents/&do=editComment&comment=309376)
* [Options](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/12587-grommets-in-period-tents/#elControls_309376_menu)

[**Graydog**](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/profile/5382-graydog/)

* Notorious Pyrate
* 
* 
* Member
* 796 posts
* Gender:Polly Wanna Cracker
* Location:The Sea
* Interests:My interest is becoming a one percenter so I can laugh at the 99 percenters. HAHAHAHAHAHA, Wow, guess I made it. Yo Ho.

([IP: 206.194.127.112](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/modcp/ip-tools/&ip=206.194.127.112)) · · 

[Posted March 31, 2008](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/12587-grommets-in-period-tents/&do=findComment&comment=309413) (edited) · [Report post](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/12587-grommets-in-period-tents/&do=reportComment&comment=309413)

As far as I know, no they are not period. That doesn't mean they didn't have grommets, they could be sewn instead of metal.

My roving the web shows various styles of metal grommets come into being in the early 1800's. The funny part was first finding them mentioned on a webpage speaking about corsets. However, they seem not to transition to tents even as late as the 1860's, based on some civil war pages. I did come across a page talking about them being used on flags as early as the mid-1860's.

But, that's just my 2 cents after rummaging around the web and listening to other people.

The little things can be the hardest to research. If anybody has more definitive information I'd love to read it.

The Smithsonian has George Washington's tent on display (or at least they did), maybe you could drop them a line and see what they say? Yes, its after GAOP, but I suspect it does not have metal grommets. However, if it does, maybe metal grommets go back further than I have been told/found on the web?

-Greydog

**Edited March 31, 2008 by Graydog**

* [Quote](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/12587-grommets-in-period-tents/)
* [Edit](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/12587-grommets-in-period-tents/&do=editComment&comment=309413)
* [Options](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/12587-grommets-in-period-tents/#elControls_309413_menu)

[**Capt. Bo of the WTF co.**](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/profile/2748-capt-bo-of-the-wtf-co/)

* Scourge o' the 7 Seas
* 
* 
* Member
* 2,339 posts
* Gender:Male
* Location:Spanish Louisiana - on the river Osage
* Interests:Many and varied.

([IP: 64.85.216.92](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/modcp/ip-tools/&ip=64.85.216.92)) · · 

[Posted March 31, 2008](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/12587-grommets-in-period-tents/&do=findComment&comment=309417) · [Report post](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/12587-grommets-in-period-tents/&do=reportComment&comment=309417)

 Capn\_Enigma said:

 Capt. Bo of the WTF co. said:

These three companies make tentage for the movie industry and have extensive knowledge of the topic.

Bo

Is that the same movie industry that puts leather tricorns, knee- high boots and hair beadwork on fictional Captains? Great source for authenticity, then. 

Sod off

* [Quote](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/12587-grommets-in-period-tents/)
* [Edit](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/12587-grommets-in-period-tents/&do=editComment&comment=309417)
* [Options](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/12587-grommets-in-period-tents/#elControls_309417_menu)

[**count de monet**](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/profile/6467-count-de-monet/)

* Ship's Master
* 
* 
* Member
* 125 posts
* Location:st. louis, mo.
* Interests:sailing, aircooled vw's,woodworking, airbrush painting,makin' stuff, photography.....

([IP: 70.249.214.63](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/modcp/ip-tools/&ip=70.249.214.63)) · · 

[Posted March 31, 2008](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/12587-grommets-in-period-tents/&do=findComment&comment=309446) · [Report post](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/12587-grommets-in-period-tents/&do=reportComment&comment=309446)

looked over a few books i have.... they did use "grommets" in sail making. but they were called "bullseyes" and weren't like grommets today.

i did not see a listing for the material used, but i suspect iron. these were round rings which were then sewn into the sail for the purpose of attaching lines of various types.

todays grommets do away with the sewing business...

since tents and shelters were more than likely made from sails, ( duh, readily available ) there probably were SEWN IN grommets.

from the book lore of ships



* [Quote](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/12587-grommets-in-period-tents/)
* [Edit](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/12587-grommets-in-period-tents/&do=editComment&comment=309446)
* [Options](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/12587-grommets-in-period-tents/#elControls_309446_menu)

[**Capn\_Enigma**](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/profile/139-capn_enigma/)

* Plunderer
* 
* 
* Member
* 432 posts

([IP: 88.70.177.211](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/modcp/ip-tools/&ip=88.70.177.211)) · · 

[Posted April 1, 2008](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/12587-grommets-in-period-tents/&do=findComment&comment=309456) (edited) · [Report post](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/12587-grommets-in-period-tents/&do=reportComment&comment=309456)

 Capt. Bo of the WTF co. said:

Sod off

I was hoping for something a little better than that from you, Sir. A man of your education. 

**Edited April 1, 2008 by Capn\_Enigma**

* [Quote](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/12587-grommets-in-period-tents/)
* [Edit](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/12587-grommets-in-period-tents/&do=editComment&comment=309456)
* [Options](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/12587-grommets-in-period-tents/#elControls_309456_menu)

[**Littleneckhalfshell**](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/profile/4-littleneckhalfshell/)

* Plunderer
* 
* 
* Member
* 390 posts
* Gender:Male
* Location:Hudson Valley, NY
* Interests:Blacksmithing, hunting, fishing, stuff.......

([IP: 68.193.4.238](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/modcp/ip-tools/&ip=68.193.4.238)) · · 

[Posted April 1, 2008](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/12587-grommets-in-period-tents/&do=findComment&comment=309508) · [Report post](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/12587-grommets-in-period-tents/&do=reportComment&comment=309508)

""looked over a few books i have.... they did use "grommets" in sail making. but they were called "bullseyes" and weren't like grommets today.

i did not see a listing for the material used, but i suspect iron. these were round rings which were then sewn into the sail for the purpose of attaching lines of various types.""

Count, do you know how far back 'bullseyes' went? and anything in regard to their size? I have some brass rings, similar to the kind they used to use on the old merry-go-round, "grab the brass ring and win a free ride" I don't think that is where they came from, but they would make a much better start for a bullseye than iron. I think I read that way back, bone was used, but again, no date. I have searched for a good period view of what the edge of a sail might have looked like, but no results. Questions like yours, sewn grommets? bolt rope? sewn in, or attached to the edge? Not ready to sew a tent or sail yet, but would like to know. Good Question

* [Quote](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/12587-grommets-in-period-tents/)
* [Edit](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/12587-grommets-in-period-tents/&do=editComment&comment=309508)
* [Options](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/12587-grommets-in-period-tents/#elControls_309508_menu)

[**Littleneckhalfshell**](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/profile/4-littleneckhalfshell/)

* Plunderer
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* Member
* 390 posts
* Gender:Male
* Location:Hudson Valley, NY
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([IP: 68.193.4.238](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/modcp/ip-tools/&ip=68.193.4.238)) · · 

[Posted April 1, 2008](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/12587-grommets-in-period-tents/&do=findComment&comment=309516) · [Report post](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/12587-grommets-in-period-tents/&do=reportComment&comment=309516)

another possible insight on 'sails' as tent material. I read in an article on the Batavia, a reconstruction of a 17th cent. VOC ship the following that speaks of a 'special stitch used' in the 17th cent. called "the 'double round seam' stitch" I know Kass had a stitching class in 'Plunder', but I don't think that one was covered. Anyone know how it goes?

(The sails

The Batavia has 10 sails and 2 bonnets. Seventeenth century sailing rigging does not have real possibilities to reeve the sails. A bonnet is a strip of sailcloth which is attached to the sail with loose ossels. If the wind gets stronger, the bonnet is removed. The lateen mizzen and the fore staysail of the Batavia each have a bonnet.

With the exception of the lateen mizzen, the Batavia is square-rigged, which means that the sails are attached to yards which are set crossways to the length of the ship. The yards are attached to the masts with so-called parrels and can be lowered and hoisted.

The sails are made of linen cloth, the bigger sails being of a heavier quality than the smaller ones. Each sail is made of canvas strips each 60 cm in width, called cloths. The cloths have been sewn together manually by the sailmakers of the yard using a special stitch, the 'double round seam' which was commonly used in the 17th century. Furthermore, each sail has all kinds of other rigging for its operation. )

* [Quote](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/12587-grommets-in-period-tents/)
* [Edit](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/12587-grommets-in-period-tents/&do=editComment&comment=309516)
* [Options](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/12587-grommets-in-period-tents/#elControls_309516_menu)

[**count de monet**](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/profile/6467-count-de-monet/)

* Ship's Master
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* Member
* 125 posts
* Location:st. louis, mo.
* Interests:sailing, aircooled vw's,woodworking, airbrush painting,makin' stuff, photography.....

([IP: 70.249.214.63](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/modcp/ip-tools/&ip=70.249.214.63)) · · 

[Posted April 1, 2008](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/12587-grommets-in-period-tents/&do=findComment&comment=309529) · [Report post](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/12587-grommets-in-period-tents/&do=reportComment&comment=309529)

the book i have doesn't mention material, but you are probably right about the brass ones. size would depend on the size of the sail. bigger sail, bigger rope, bigger "grommet".

i'll see if i can squeeze in time to post a link to some pics

out of the books i have. no scanner, so i take a pic, and the upload. last ones turned out fine..

double round seem stitch ?? have to look.. sometimes the names change but i'll see.

* [Quote](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/12587-grommets-in-period-tents/)
* [Edit](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/12587-grommets-in-period-tents/&do=editComment&comment=309529)
* [Options](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/12587-grommets-in-period-tents/#elControls_309529_menu)

[**Silver**](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/profile/3659-silver/)

* Plunderer
* 
* 
* Member
* 347 posts
* Gender:Male
* Location:Virginia Beach, Virginia
* Interests:Maritime history

([IP: 24.253.129.208](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/modcp/ip-tools/&ip=24.253.129.208)) · · 

[Posted April 1, 2008](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/12587-grommets-in-period-tents/&do=findComment&comment=309530) · [Report post](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/12587-grommets-in-period-tents/&do=reportComment&comment=309530)

if making a tent to appaer to be a sail, sewing in a boltrope and making earings on your conners would be period. checkout "the young sea officer's sheet anchor" by darcy lever.

* [Quote](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/12587-grommets-in-period-tents/)
* [Edit](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/12587-grommets-in-period-tents/&do=editComment&comment=309530)
* [Options](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/12587-grommets-in-period-tents/#elControls_309530_menu)

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* Plunderer
* 
* 
* Member
* 347 posts
* Gender:Male
* Location:Virginia Beach, Virginia
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[Posted April 1, 2008](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/12587-grommets-in-period-tents/&do=findComment&comment=309535) · [Report post](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/12587-grommets-in-period-tents/&do=reportComment&comment=309535)

another book to look at is "the rigging of ships in the days of the spritsail topmast, 1600-1720" by r.c. anderson

* [Quote](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/12587-grommets-in-period-tents/)
* [Edit](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/12587-grommets-in-period-tents/&do=editComment&comment=309535)
* [Options](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/12587-grommets-in-period-tents/#elControls_309535_menu)

[**Rumba Rue**](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/profile/5984-rumba-rue/)

* Immortal Pyrate
* 
* 
* Member
* 7,270 posts
* Gender:Female

([IP: 70.179.52.114](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/modcp/ip-tools/&ip=70.179.52.114)) · · 

[Posted April 2, 2008](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/12587-grommets-in-period-tents/&do=findComment&comment=309633) · [Report post](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/12587-grommets-in-period-tents/&do=reportComment&comment=309633)

I made my own cover out of canvas to cover up the easy-up our group uses. I used ties all around, no grommets anywhere.

* [Quote](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/12587-grommets-in-period-tents/)
* [Edit](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/12587-grommets-in-period-tents/&do=editComment&comment=309633)
* [Options](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/12587-grommets-in-period-tents/#elControls_309633_menu)

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[Posted April 2, 2008](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/12587-grommets-in-period-tents/&do=findComment&comment=309673) · [Report post](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/12587-grommets-in-period-tents/&do=reportComment&comment=309673)

my mistake.... the "gromments" were not called bulls eyes... under further examination ( sounds technical, huh ?? ), the notes for the pic did not point out the " grommets" .

the bulls eyes were for guiding the ropes that furled ( rolled ) the sails up..

they do show sewn "grommets" but do not go into their construction. probably holes that were sewn to beef them up a bit..

there are still " grommets" in the sails, but they are not called bulls eyes.

sorry 

* [Quote](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/12587-grommets-in-period-tents/)
* [Edit](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/12587-grommets-in-period-tents/&do=editComment&comment=309673)
* [Options](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/12587-grommets-in-period-tents/#elControls_309673_menu)

[**Capt. Bo of the WTF co.**](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/profile/2748-capt-bo-of-the-wtf-co/)

* Scourge o' the 7 Seas
* 
* 
* Member
* 2,339 posts
* Gender:Male
* Location:Spanish Louisiana - on the river Osage
* Interests:Many and varied.

([IP: 64.85.217.138](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/modcp/ip-tools/&ip=64.85.217.138)) · · 

[Posted April 2, 2008](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/12587-grommets-in-period-tents/&do=findComment&comment=309679) · [Report post](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/12587-grommets-in-period-tents/&do=reportComment&comment=309679)

There is a discussion on another forum concerning the use and cost of brass in the colonies that brought up an interesting point. Brass was not manufactured here in this time period, nor was much of anything else. America was a source for raw materials, and a market for finished goods from England, which dominated trade here. Brass would not likely have been squandered on such things as tent grommets due to its expense. Therefore it is highly unlikely that brass grommets would be found in period tents. They would most likely have been made as I mentioned before, as shown in the "Arts of the Sailor", by taking a length of line in small diameter, (3/8" or les), cutting pieces from this in short lengths of about six inches, unravelling the strands and making a ring from each of the three strands into grommets approximately 1 3/4" in diameter. This is then sewn into the canvas and so you have your grommet in place. On a side note, people in tents are way over represented in our modern re-enactmnets, so authenticity in tent details is really a moot point all things considered.

Bo

* [Quote](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/12587-grommets-in-period-tents/)
* [Edit](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/12587-grommets-in-period-tents/&do=editComment&comment=309679)
* [Options](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/12587-grommets-in-period-tents/#elControls_309679_menu)

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[Posted April 3, 2008](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/12587-grommets-in-period-tents/&do=findComment&comment=309738) (edited) · [Report post](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/12587-grommets-in-period-tents/&do=reportComment&comment=309738)

Two thoughts here, expecially about the sail construction. First, is there anyone who's been able to take a close look at HMS Victory's fore tops'l? I know it's OOP, but it might give some insight to the construction of sails back then, especially with regard to the stitches used.

Also, the Lady Washington is currently having a new set of sails made. Sure, again she's slightly out of period (though closer than Victory), being originally built in the 1750's, but again it might provide some insight. They are being made without any metal in them for the sake of historical accuracy.

 Quote

The edges of the sails were “roped” by hand with thread, and each eyelet, where the rigging will attach, was punched out and stiff “donuts” of thread were meticulously sewn in with alternating long and short stitches. Each one takes hours to complete.

The Lady's new sprits'l

(from [)http://www.thedailyworld.com/articles/2008...ews/01news.txt)](http://www.thedailyworld.com/articles/2008/03/25/local_news/01news.txt)

I have personally made small versions of what I believe is being described out of some small tarred hemp line. I got the idea from The Ashley Book of Knots. Essentially, a few loops are made from the line in the size of the grommet, and then the line is whipped around, making a fairly sturdy rope grommet. This can then be sewn into the sail. However, my personal opinion on the matter, is that metal would make an even sturdier grommet, and may have been a method used later on. As anyone who's made a monkey's fist knows, though the knot can be made without anything solid in the middle, a lead weight, marble, etc. gives this knot a finer shape (usually) and can increase its effectiveness as a heaving line.

Ashley's also describes "the common grommet" on page 470 (knots 2864-5) as made out of a single strand of rope. He also mentions "in tarred hemp, grommets are made of small stuff, the full size. Eyelet Hole Grommets in sails are of marline or small wire. The length of strand required for a grommet is three times the circumference of the grommet plus six times the round of the rope". He also mentions wire rope grommets and cable grommets, but these are obviously OOP. However, as the book was originally copywrighted in 1944, it's interesting to not that the skill of making rope grommets was still around, a sign that not every grommet in the early 20th Century ships was metal. On p. 69, Ashley states "In making eyelets for cringes and reef points, a hole is stuck through the canvas with a stabber, and grommets are laid around the holes for reinforcement. These are closely stitched over and fidded out."

There was no Double Round Seam Stitch mentioned in the glossary or index, but as stated, it may have taken a different name. In summary, I believe that metal MAY have been used, especially in the larger ships, within sewn grommets. However, there were undoubtedly ships that didn't have that kind of budget or resources, so the rope grommets would be accurate, and probably more common.

Coastie 

**Edited April 4, 2008 by Coastie04**

* [Quote](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/12587-grommets-in-period-tents/)
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* [Options](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/12587-grommets-in-period-tents/#elControls_309738_menu)

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[Posted April 3, 2008](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/12587-grommets-in-period-tents/&do=findComment&comment=309789) · [Report post](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/12587-grommets-in-period-tents/&do=reportComment&comment=309789)

good post coast04. got to thinking i have read that somewhere. pulled out my old boatswain's mate 3&2 1976 edtion and there it is how to hand make a grommet using marlin(tarred line) as the gromment and sew it into the canvas.

* [Quote](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/12587-grommets-in-period-tents/)
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[Posted April 4, 2008](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/12587-grommets-in-period-tents/&do=findComment&comment=309830) · [Report post](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/12587-grommets-in-period-tents/&do=reportComment&comment=309830)

The historian in me is slightly pained, as I don't have any of the original sources to confirm my suspicions here. The only book I had on hand was Ashley's, and it is from the tail end of the age of sail. So, I don't know how much to trust it for earlier methods of sail making (and thus presumably tent making).

Another thought I had recently was if they really used sails as tents. Is there any evidence of this? I know it's one of those 'logical' conclusions, but also it is important to remember that at this time, the sails were extremely important to keep in good shape. They were the primary means of propulsion for the ship. It is possible that spare canvas (which they would undoubtably have to repair sails) was sewn loosly into tents as a temporary measure, and then they were taken apart and stored for use in sails again. Even battle-torn sails were often kept to patch other sails, make chafing gear, etc. It just seems to me that sails that are in good enough condition to make tents might be too valuable to use as tents. They could be if it's a shipwreck situation, but under normal circumstances it would be like a ship using fuel today to light a fire on shore. Sure, it's possible (maybe assume gasoline for this example), but not the best use of the fuel unless the boat is already wrecked on the rocks and it's a fight for survival.

Just wanted to share this new idea. Regardless, if tents were made, they would probably use many of the sailmaking stitches, techniques, et al. because of the skills available on the crew.

Coastie 

* [Quote](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/12587-grommets-in-period-tents/)
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* [Options](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/12587-grommets-in-period-tents/#elControls_309830_menu)

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* Admin
* 1,773 posts
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[Posted April 4, 2008](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/12587-grommets-in-period-tents/&do=findComment&comment=309893) · [Report post](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/12587-grommets-in-period-tents/&do=reportComment&comment=309893)

capt john smith recorded that one of the first church services at jamestown was held under a sail used as a shelter held up on its four corners. unfortunately, no further discription. we know smith may have embelished a bit in some of the narratives in later years, but thats a pretty basic description.

* [Quote](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/12587-grommets-in-period-tents/)
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[Posted April 4, 2008](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/12587-grommets-in-period-tents/&do=findComment&comment=309899) · [Report post](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/12587-grommets-in-period-tents/&do=reportComment&comment=309899)

Resourcefullness was necessity, and there are period drawings of sail shelters in the Time-Life series on mariners/pyrates/etc. Just because a sail was no longer fit for use as such does not mean it was dicarded. It would have been recycled into many things including shelter, clothing, bags covers... you get the idea. We live in a disposable/throw-away society and often forget the resourcefullness of our forebears. Great info by the way Coastie!

Bo

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[Posted April 4, 2008](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/12587-grommets-in-period-tents/&do=findComment&comment=309912) · [Report post](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/12587-grommets-in-period-tents/&do=reportComment&comment=309912)

coastie,

can you orient the sail for me if possible.

there are vertical and horizontal lines. i'm assuming one set are creases from folds (vertical) and the other are seams (horizontal). my senses are saying its hanging properly off a boom of sorts, but i've been known to be wrong.

* [Quote](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/12587-grommets-in-period-tents/)
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[Posted April 5, 2008](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/12587-grommets-in-period-tents/&do=findComment&comment=309944) · [Report post](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/12587-grommets-in-period-tents/&do=reportComment&comment=309944)

The Victory's sail is hanging as it would have from a yard. The top is the top, bottom the bottom, etc. The vertical lines are seams in the sail, while the horizontal lines are reef points. For the Lady's sail, it's being held up in much the same way, though the far side has both the top and bottom corners held almost together. The hole in the sail lets water drain out of it when it's set beneath the bow sprit. Also an interesting point to note, the reef lines are not 'horizontal' as in the Victory's tops'l. Instead, the sail is reefed diagonally, since the yard is often set cocked to lend support to the entire rig. Thus, the lower side of the sail would be reefed up to prevent it from creating drag in the water.

Thank you both for the info about using sails as shelters, though I still think they might have been used only old, worn out sails, or improvised tents with other materials before using a good sail. However, I may very well be wrong on the matter as well.

Coastie 

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[Posted April 5, 2008](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/12587-grommets-in-period-tents/&do=findComment&comment=309964) · [Report post](http://pyracy.com/index.php?/topic/12587-grommets-in-period-tents/&do=reportComment&comment=309964)

 Coastie04 said:

Thank you both for the info about using sails as shelters, though I still think they might have been used only old, worn out sails, or improvised tents with other materials before using a good sail. However, I may very well be wrong on the matter as well.

Coastie 

I would have to agree that the first choice would not have been a new one for the reasons you already stated. On another forum there is a similar topic about the french Courier du Bois and sailing those big frieght canoes at times, and also using the sail stretched over the over-turned canoe for an improvised shelter.

I have way too many tents after 20 years in re-enacting, but the simple tarp has sooo many uses that I would recommend this over anything else for the pyrate re-enactment camps. The possiblities are limited only to the imagination of the crew.

Bo