

## MARITIME ARCHIVES & LIBRARY

#### **INFORMATION SHEET 37**

# **RIVER MERSEY SURVEYS**

### **Introduction**

The Mersey Conservancy Act of 1842 established the Mersey Conservancy Commission, whose officers acted on behalf of the Monarch, who was the 'conservator of all navigable rivers'. The Acting Conservator then produced surveys for both the Corporation of Liverpool and the Trustees of Liverpool Docks.

Since 1858, however, the navigation authority for the Estuary has been the Mersey Docks and Harbour Board, who inherited the powers of the Dock Trustees with regard to the care of the River and its approaches. The Board surveyed the Upper Estuary and measured its capacity and depth in 1861, 1871 and 1881, and since that time they have made surveys at five-yearly intervals. The Dock Board also carried out the dredging of Liverpool Bay and surveyed and marked the navigable channels and sandbanks in the area.

The upkeep of buoys in the upper part of the Upper Estuary and certain other duties were carried out by other authorities such as the Bridgewater Canal Old Quay Navigation Company. However, in 1876, the Upper Mersey Navigation Commission took over these responsibilities until their demise in 1971.

The Mersey Docks and Harbour Board collection contains river surveys produced by all of the above mentioned authorities. Surveys produced by the Upper Mersey Navigation Commission between 1870-1970 are held at the reserve store and are available by advance appointment only.

#### **Annual Surveys: 1836 - 1969**

Marine Surveyors / Trustees of Liverpool Docks / Liverpool Corporation / Mersey Docks and Harbour Board.

#### Monthly Surveys: May 1863 - May 1873

Bridgewater Canal Old Quay Navigation Company.

## Reference Works: Maritime Archives & Library

Estuary of the River Mersey - Effect of Discharge of Crude Sewage. His Majesty's Stationery Office, 223.DEP/OS. 1933.

MOUNTFIELD, Stuart. Western Gateway - A History of the Mersey Docks and Harbour Board, 610.MOU. 1965.