MARITIME ARCHIVES AND LIBRARY

INFORMATION SHEET 62

SOURCES FOR SHIPPING RESEARCH

The following listing is intended as a guide to the sources for research at the Maritime Archives & Library only. This list includes original archive material, as well as secondary publications. Details of holdings are given with covering dates, original archive material is denoted by a reference code following the date. The Library collections, in some cases, may not be complete and would require further consultation elsewhere. The majority of the collections are held at the Maritime Archives & Library with the exception of Liverpool Dock Registers which are available by appointment only.

Ships

Lloyd's Register, 1764 to date

An annual alphabetical list of vessels giving details current at the time of publication. Until 1890 it was almost exclusively limited to British-registered vessels, although some foreign vessels, which regularly traded with the UK, were included.

Mercantile Navy List, 1849-1976 (gaps)

Official list of British-registered merchant vessels (published for the Register General of Shipping & Seamen). Contains mostly the same categories as Lloyd's Register, ie name of vessel, official number, signal code, rig, tonnage, dimensions, construction, date and place of build, owner, port and date of registry. The early registers are worth looking at, in particular between 1849-1864, as they contain lists of holders of masters and mates certificates and pilots, as well as annual obituary lists and cumulative lists of officers who had received awards and testimonials for exceptional services at sea, typically in relation to shipwrecks. Lists of officers of the Royal Naval Reserve are also included between 1863-1864. Naval lists are available at the Guildhall Library for the following dates, 1857-1940, 1947-1976 (with monthly supplements 1947-1977).

Lloyd's Register of Yachts, 1878-1990 (gaps)

The registers are comparable with Lloyd's Registers and are similar in arrangement. They cover yachts of all nationalities except those covered by Lloyd's Register of American Yachts. Entries include owner, builder and designer. From 1920 they also include colour plates of flags and sailing clubs until 1922, when they added yacht clubs, sailing clubs and distinguished flags of yachtsmen which ended in 1960. Also included is a list of yacht owners, who have obtained certificates as masters of their own yachts, with number and date of their certificate; this was available between 1895 and 1956. From 1957 until 1994 a yacht owner's master's competency was indicated with an asterisk by their name. The date and certificate number was no longer recorded. In 1995 the registers ceased to record a master's competency.

Liverpool Registers of Merchant Ships, 1739-1855 (microfilm)

Contains records of ownership and technical details of the vessel. There is an index, which is arranged alphabetically and chronologically. See Information Sheet 50 for further details. The archive collection also contains Subsidiary Register Books of non-Liverpool registered vessels and Register Books for Runcorn, 1862-1937, and a Fishing Vessels Register, 1921-1929.

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Liverpool Underwriters' List of Iron Vessels, 1862-1885

Contains the vessels which have been surveyed by the Liverpool Registry.

Merchant Vessels of the United States, 1897-1918

American equivalent to the Mercantile Navy lists, listing sail, steam and unrigged vessels. Early 1900 volumes contain number of crew with the exception of the master. There is also a section on losses detailing the nature and place of the casualties, numbers on board and numbers of lives lost. The National Maritime Museum holds volumes for 1913, 1915-1916, 1918-1939, 1941, 1943-1965, 1968-1980.

Research Collections

Captain Beard (microfiche)

Alphabetical compilation of late 19th century sailing ship histories.

Cochrane Research Collection (microfiche)

Alphabetical compilation by name of steamship histories, compiled by Douglas B. Cochrane.

Shipping Movements

Lloyd's List Reprints, 1741-1826, 1827-1974 (microfilm); Indexes, 1838-1927 (microfilm)

The List reports sailings and arrivals port by port, they are useful if you do not know the name of the ship. However, they do not contain names of passengers or crew. Allow for some delay as the arrivals or departures for the same day at the same port, may not all appear in the same issue of the list. During the war period separate indexes on movements were issued for restricted circulation and are entitled: Overseas Shipping Intelligence, 1917-1918 and Lloyd's List: Confidential Movements, 1939-1945. Both are available on microfilm. The indexes cover the shipping movements and casualties section of the Lloyd's List, and are arranged alphabetically by name of vessel. Steamers and sailing vessels are distinguished. Ships masters are given, if known.

Lloyd's Shipping Index, 1880-1980

Lloyd's Weekly Shipping Index, January 1880 - June 1914.
Lloyd's Weekly Index, July 1914 - April 1917.
Lloyd's Confidential Daily List, April 1917 - November 1918.
Lloyd's Daily Index, December 1918 - 12 May 1932.
Lloyd's Daily Shipping Index, 19 May 1932 - January 1936.
Lloyd's Shipping Index, February 1936 - October 1980.

These volumes contain a summary of information contained in Lloyd's List, divided into two sections: sailing vessels and steamers.

Liverpool Dock Registers, 1827-1926

They are the only source to list the movements of ships within the Liverpool and Birkenhead dock system. They are arranged in groups of docks, however, finding information is more difficult as a register can list arrivals in more than one dock and it can be difficult to know which dock is involved. In addition the registers are not indexed and are therefore difficult to use. Tracing departures and arrivals from the port would be easier using Lloyd's List. See

Information Sheet 49 for further details. These records are available strictly by appointment only.

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Shipping Losses: War

First World War

Lloyd's Shipping Index (see above)
Lloyd's List (see above)
Overseas Shipping Intelligence, 1917-1918 (see above)

Second World War

Lloyd's Weekly Casualty Reports, 1920-1980
The reports are a compilation of casualties reprinted from Lloyd's List of the previous week.

Lloyd's List (see above)

Shipping Losses: Other than War Losses

Lloyd's Shipping Index (see above)

Lloyd's Weekly Casualty Reports, 1920-1980
A weekly compilation from Lloyd's List of the previous week.

Liverpool Underwriters Casualty Returns, 1911-1985 (gaps)
Off-prints from Lloyd's List monthly returns made by the Liverpool Underwriters Association of casualties for sail and steam vessels of 500 tons and over. They include statistics and details of the casualties including cargo.

Wrecks

Mersey Docks and Harbour Board Wreck Files, 1881-1950

They relate to wrecks in and around the Mersey and its approaches. 235 files have survived though the content can often vary.

MDHB/WR/1-235

Cargo

Customs Bills of Entry, 1820-1939

The Maritime Archives & Library holds the national set of Bills of Entry. The Customs Authorities for the convenience of the merchant community published them daily. Each bill contains what is termed 'ships reports' which are of great value in the study of merchanting.

They contain details of all ships arriving in port and particulars of the port registration, the tonnage, master, dock, ship's agent and last port of clearance, together with a full account of all merchandise carried and to whom it was consigned. Summaries of imports, exports and articles entering and released from the bonded warehouses appeared in every issue, as did information regarding ships entered outwards, ships cleared outwards and ships loading. For further information see Information Sheets 6 and 7. Volumes available are:

Liverpool, 1820 - 1939 (gaps) available on microfilm.
Bristol, 1832 - 1917 (gaps).

Clyde, 1841 - 1939 (gaps).
Clyde & Forth, 1919 - 1939 (gaps).
Dublin, 1850 - 1923 (gaps).
Hull, 1831 - 1937, 1863, 1884-1939.
Tyne, 1875 - 1927 (gaps).
London, 1660 (copy), 1779 - 1783, 1817 - 1939.

London Bills also include overseas trade for Bristol, Hull and Liverpool. In the Bristol volume for 1847, Southampton is also included.

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Bibliography

The Library contains a comprehensive collection of shipping company histories including fleet lists.

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Lloyd's War Losses: The First World War: Casualties to Shipping through Enemy Causes, 1914-1918. London: Lloyd's of London Press Ltd., 1990.

Lloyd's War Losses: The Second World War, (September 3, 1939 - August 14, 1945): British Allied and Neutral Merchant Vessels Sunk or Destroyed by War Causes, Vol. 1. London: Lloyd's of London Press, 1989.

RODGER, N.A.M. *Naval Records for Genealogists: Public Record Office Handbook No. 22*. Kew, Richmond, Surrey: PRO Publications, 1998.

SMITH, Kelvin, WATTS, Christopher T. & WATTS, Michael J. *Records of Merchant Shipping and Seamen: Public Record Office Reader's Guide No. 20*. Kew, Richmond, Surrey: PRO Publications, 1998.

Tracing Your Family History: Merchant Navy. London: Imperial War Museum, 2000.

Tracing Your Family History: Royal Navy. London: Imperial War Museum, 1999.

Useful Addresses

Guildhall Library Aldermanbury London EC2P 2EJ Tel: 020 7332 1868/1870 Fax: 020 7600 3384 Email: printedbooks.guildhall@corpoflondon.gov.uk	**The National Archives (PRO)** Ruskin Avenue Kew, Richmond Surrey TW9 4DU Tel: 020 8392 5200 Fax: 020 8878 8905 Email: enquiry@nationalarchives.gov.uk Website: www.nationalarchives.gov.uk

National Maritime Museum Romney Road Greenwich London SE10 9NF Tel: *General Enquiries* - 020 8858 4422 *Plans and Photographic Enquiries* - 020 8312 8600 Email: plansandphotos@nmm.ac.uk Website: www.nmm.ac.uk	**Imperial War Museum** **Department of Documents** Lambeth Road London SE1 6HZ Tel: 020 7416 5220/1/2/3 Fax: 020 7416 5374 Email: docs@iwm.org.uk Website: www.iwm.org.uk
Royal Naval Museum HM Naval Base (PP66) Portsmouth Hampshire PO1 3NH Tel: 023 9272 7577 Fax: 023 9272 7575 Email: matthew.sheldon@royalnavalmuseum.org Website: www.royalnavalmuseum.org	**Registry of Shipping and Seamen** MCA, Cardiff Anchor Court Ocean Way Cardiff CF24 5JW Tel: 02920 448800 Fax: 02920 448802 Email: registryofshipping&seamen@mcga.gov.uk Website: www.mcga.org.uk