

**MARITIME ARCHIVES & LIBRARY****INFORMATION SHEET 20****ALEXANDRA TOWING COMPANY LIMITED**

Founded at Liverpool in 1887, after the takeover of G.B. Cowl's tonnage firm of 1882, with the Mack family and Alexander Bicket (Athel Line) among the major shareholders, it became one of the major towage firms on the Mersey. It took over W. & T. Joliffe & Co. of Liverpool, a tug company founded in 1854. In 1919 it followed the Cunard Line's move to Southampton and in 1925 it had a base at Swansea. A series of takeovers between 1962 and 1975, including Liverpool Screw Towing, Britannia Towing Co. (Swansea) in 1962, J.H. Lamey in 1968 and London Tugs in 1975, made it a national business. It also diversified into deep-sea towage, offshore service, ship repair, aircraft and road transport. In 1992 it was sold to Howard Smith Industries of Hull.

As well as the records and books listed below, the Merseyside Maritime Museum holds five models and the full-size tug, *Brocklebank* (1964).

**Records**

Corporate/Administration Records, 1887 - 1977.

Share Records, 1893 - 1979.

Financial Records, 1887 - 1990.

Operational Records, 1966 - 1985

Staff Records, 1901 - 1969: registers of directors, 1901, 1948-1959; records of employment, 1947-1960; wage books, 1927-1966; wages file, 1961; injuries and accident file, 1963-1969.

**Please note: some of these records may be subject to access restrictions under the Data Protection Act, 1998.**

Publicity, Miscellaneous, 1912 - 1984.

Photographs, 1912 - 1984: of tugs and other vessels relating to all associated companies.

Records of other companies included in the Archives: Alexandra Marine Transportation Ltd., 1982-1984; Britannia Steam Towage Ltd., 1935-1972; Bulk Cargo Handling Services, 1963-1981; Drysdale Towing Ltd., 1964; J.H. Lamey Ltd., c.1946-1967; Liverpool Screw Towing Ltd., 1983-1984; North West Tugs Ltd., 1895-1966; Southampton Steamship Co., Ltd., 1933; United Grain Elevators Ltd., c.1900. **Detailed lists are available on application.**

B/AT

1887 - 1990

46 Boxes, 75 Volumes

The Ship Plan collection holds some plans of Alexandra Towing vessels.

**Bibliography**

*History of Alexandra Towing Co., Ltd.* Liverpool: Pagan Smith Advertising Ltd., n.d.

HALLAM, W.B. *Blow Five: A History of the Alexandra Towing Co., Ltd.* Liverpool: *The Journal of Commerce and Shipping Ltd.*, 1976.

NICHOLSON, Tim. *Take the Strain: The Alexandra Towing Company and the British Tugboat Business, 1833-1987.* Liverpool: The Alexandra Towing Co., Ltd., 1990.