

# MARITIME ARCHIVES & LIBRARY

## INFORMATION SHEET 68

### MARITIME RECORDS AT WIRRAL ARCHIVES INCLUDING CAMMELL LAIRD

Main Repository  
and Reading Room

Wirral Archives Service  
Lower Ground Floor  
Cheshire Lines Building  
Canning Street  
Birkenhead  
Wirral  
CH41 1ND

Opening hours:  
Monday to Friday 9.30am to  
4.30pm by appointment only.

Telephone:

0151 606 2929

Fax:

0151 606 2928

Email:

[archives@wirral.gov.uk](mailto:archives@wirral.gov.uk).

Web:

[www.wirral.gov.uk](http://www.wirral.gov.uk) (in leisure and culture section of website)

Access

Free entry, identification and proof of address required.

#### **Cammell Laird & Company (Shipbuilders) (Z/CL, 1810 - 1993)**

William Laird established a boilerworks in Wallasey Pool in 1824, and the yard received its first shipbuilding order in 1828. In 1856 the business was moved to a new site on the Mersey River front at Tranmere. The firm amalgamated with Charles Cammell & Company, Steel Manufacturers of Sheffield in 1903, and became known as Cammell Laird & Co. Following further name changes, nationalisation and denationalisation, the Birkenhead Shipyard of Cammell Laird Shipbuilders Limited closed down in 1993, ending more than 170 years of shipbuilding. During this time the firm had achieved international renown for its world-class skills and progressive character, particularly in advocating and developing, against staunch opposition, the construction of iron ships to replace centuries of tradition in building ships from wood.

The collection comprises an extensive series of business records including board minutes, accounts, contract books, specifications and technical data, publicity material, ships plans and photographs.

The earliest records are the minute books and financial records of Charles Cammell & Company Limited. The earliest information about individual vessels held include contract books from the 1850s. Correspondence and specifications for many of the earlier vessels is held. However, ships plans and photographs survive only rarely prior to the twentieth century.

#### **Personnel Records**

The majority of the personnel records were not transferred to Wirral Archives by Cammell Laird and are presumed destroyed. Some staff records were retained by the holding company and are now held by BAE Systems. Contact the Wirral Archives for more details.

## Staff Records held at Wirral Archives

Z/CL/5/299/001-001	Staff Pensions A - Z	c.1861 - 1958
Z/CL/5/299/004	Staff Salaries: foremen and assistants	c.1890 - 1958
Z/CL/5/301/002	Staff Salaries: 'Office-current'	c.1912 - 1955
Z/CL/5/299/003	Staff Salaries: ['Engineering']	c.1916 - 1958
Z/CL/5/301/003	Staff Salaries: 'Ship[building]'	c.1918 - 1955
Z/CL/5/300/001-004	Staff Salaries: 'Office-left'	c.1918 - 1957
Z/CL/5/0178	Monthly salaries ledger	1915 - 1919
Z/CL/5/0179	Monthly salaries ledger	1920 - 1937
Z/CL/5/293/000	Staff Index: (Leavers)	c.1915 - 966
Z/CL/5/301/001	Staff Salaries: Apprentices/office boys	1943 - 1946
Z/CL/5/294/000	Payroll Record	1958 - 1967
Z/CL/5/295/000	Staff Index	1963

## House Magazines

Z/CL/12/0022/000	<i>The Camel</i> (copy)	1920
Z/CL/12/0008/007	Cammell Laird Magazine	1957 - 1965

## Photographs

The archive includes some photographs featuring employees, many taken for the staff magazine. Workers also often appear in photographs of ship construction, but names are not listed.

## **L. Ellis & Company (Ships Furnishers) (Z/EL, c.1870s - 1970s)**

This business was established in 1856 by Lilly Ellis as upholsterers, dyers and steam-bleachers. The business developed as a supplier of upholstered goods to shipping. It was based at the Albion Works, Albion Street, Birkenhead.

The collection comprises an extensive series of business records including letter books, ledgers, wage records, order books and stock books.

## **Henry B. Hornby Limited (Boat Builders) (Z/HH, c.1927 - 1994)**

This firm was established in c.1901 by Henry B. Hornby as a firm of small boat builders in Birkenhead. The firm developed the building of surf boats for use in unloading cargo in West Africa, and the building of these boats became the mainstay of the firm. In 1923 the business was moved to new premises off Gorse Lane, Wallasey, and continued to build small wooden craft until its closure in 1965.

The collection held in Wirral Archives mainly comprises a series of photographs showing vessels built by the firm. There is also a small collection of material relating to the company's history.

## Mersey Ferry Records

The majority of Mersey Ferry records are held at Liverpool Record Office, Liverpool Central Library. However, the records listed below are held at Wirral Archives:

### Woodside, North Birkenhead and Liverpool Steam Ferry Company (B/007, 1835 - 842)

This company was formed in 1835 to take over the Woodside - Liverpool steam ferry service introduced by Hugh Williams in 1822. The ferry rights were leased from F.R. Price. This service passed to the Birkenhead Improvement Commissioners in 1842 by Act of Parliament. The Commissioners purchased the ferry rights in 1858. The collection comprises directors minutes and wage accounts.

### Birkenhead and Wallasey Ferries

The Birkenhead or 'up river' ferry routes, were the first to come under local government control, when the service was passed to Birkenhead Improvement Commissioners in 1842 by Act of Parliament, although the process took the next 16 years to complete. The Wallasey ferry routes passed to the control of the Wallasey Local Board in 1862. Following the 1968 Transport Act the Birkenhead and Wallasey ferries passed to a single authority known as the Merseyside Passenger Transport Authority.

B/004/2-9, B/035/1-12	Birkenhead Ferry Committee Minutes	1879 - 1954
W/009/1-12, W/004/C1-C47	Wallasey Ferry Committee Minutes	1858 - 1957
W/010	Wallasey Ferry Works/Works and Approaches Committee Minutes	1876 - 1879
B/920, W/920	Wirral Ferries Plans	c.1870 - 1978
B/914	Birkenhead Ferry Posters	1905 - 1942
B/910, B/911, B/915	Administrative/staff records from Ferry Manager's Office, Woodside.	1843 - 1946

## Maritime Maps and Plans

### Maritime Maps of the Board of Trade (BT/356, 1810 - 1993)

Maps submitted to the Officer of the Crown to obtain permission to carry out works that would affect the coastline of the Wirral peninsula. The Crown retains rights to the foreshore and each application was assessed as to the effect that it would have.

The collection includes early developments in Birkenhead Docks, alterations of the course of Bromborough Pool, New Brighton Pier and a number of ferry landing stages.

### Local Government Map Collections

A large collection of local maps and plans have been transferred to Wirral Archives from the stores of the predecessor local authorities of Wirral Borough Council. Amongst these the following sections may be of particular interest to researchers of maritime history.

W/808	Wallasey Docks	1882 - 1897
W/809	Wallasey Ferries (approaches, premises, etc.)	c.1854 - 1930
W/811	Wallasey Corporation: River Mersey and Liverpool Bay	c.1800 - 1952
B/808	Birkenhead Docks	1847 - 1941
B/809	Birkenhead Ferries (approaches, premises, etc.)	c.1854 - 1956
B/811	Birkenhead Corporation: River Mersey	1845 - 1949

## Local Government Building Plans (c.1855 - 1963)

From the middle of the nineteenth century local authorities began to obtain new powers which enabled them to require the submission of building plans for new buildings or alterations to buildings within their boundaries for their approval. Many of these building plans for Wirral have survived, although the series are not complete, and different dates of plans survive for different areas of the Wirral.

As all building projects had to comply with this process, various buildings of maritime interest may be found within the collections, such as lifeboat stations, sailing club house, the nautical training school at Heswall, maritime business premises, etc.

Various indexes exist to search these records, sometimes ordered by address, sometimes only by date order.

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