



Foundation

Heritage & Education
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Mercantile Navy List

The Mercantile Navy List was first published by the Board of Trade in 1857. The publication's content is similar to that of Lloyd's Register of Ships. However, where the Lloyd's Register of Ships lists all vessels over 100 gross tons, which are selfpropelled and sea-going, regardless of their country of registration, the Mercantile Navy List records all British registered vessels over one quarter of a ton, including coastal vessels and pleasure craft.

The Mercantile Navy List shows vessels' official numbers as assigned by the Registry of Shipping and Seamen. This annual publication can also be a source for information on masters and mates, as well as serving as a source of reference for tracing the ships that individual merchant seamen served on.

Between 1875 and 1904 a list of vessels removed from the British register whilst the current issue was going to press was published giving brief reasons why, for example if they were wrecked or broken up.

Researchers should check availability, accessibility and opening times with the repositories listed before making a personal visit.

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Separate monthly returns, listing vessels added or removed were also printed. The National Archives (see below) has bound volumes of these for the period 1875 to 1890 and the Guildhall Library (see below) has them for 1890 to 1946. These are particularly useful for vessels not actually lost, but hulked, laid up or condemned as unseaworthy.

Copies of the Mercantile Navy List are held by the institutions listed in the following table. This is not an exhaustive list and we are always grateful to receive news of archives holdings the Mercantile Navy List so that we can add them to our information sheet.

Alterations and additions should be emailed to: hinfo@lr.org.

Bristol

Bristol

Cornwall

The Bartlett Library

Cornwall Trust
Discovery Quay
Falmouth
Cornwall
TR11 3QY

1855; 1857; 1858; 1859; 1861; 1864; 1866; 1867; 1870;
1872; 1874; 1875 to 1917; 1919 to 1940; 1947;
1949-1951; 1953; 1955; 1957; 1958; 1960; 1964; 1965;
1970; 1972 & 1973

📞 +44(0)1326 313388
🌐 [Website](#)
✉ enquiries@nmmc.co.uk

Cumbria

The Beacon

West Strand
Whitehaven
Cumbria
CA28 7LY

Please contact the institution for details of their holdings

📞 01946 592302
🌐 [Website](#)
✉ thebeacon@copelandbc.gov.uk

Glasgow

Mitchell Library

Glasgow Libraries
The Mitchell
North Street
Glasgow G3 7DN

1857, 1862, 1878, 1881-1884, 1886, 1889, 1891-1892,
1895-1896, 1898-1909, 1911-1922, 1930-1969,
1971-1976.

🌐 [Website](#)
📞 0141 287 2910
✉ archives@glasgowlife.org.uk

Kent

The World Ships Society

Mayes House Vansittart Estate,
Windsor SL4 1SE

Extensive collection. Members only.

🌐 [Website](#)

	<p>Lloyd's Register Foundation Heritage & Education Centre 71 Fenchurch Street London EC3M 4BS</p> <p>Website 02074232475 hec.info@lrfoundation.org.uk</p>	1882, 1911, 1919-20, 1928, 1932-40, 1947, 1949, 1951, 1953, 1955, 1957, 1961, 1963, 1969, 1974-76.
London	<p>Caird Library National Maritime Museum Park Row Greenwich London SE10 9NF</p> <p>Website +44 (0)20 8312 6516 info@cdhs.org.uk</p>	1857-1869, 1871-1872, 1875, 1877-1879, 1881-1883, 1885-1889, 1891, 1894-1897, 1899-1966, 1968-1975, 1979 to date.
	<p>Guildhall Library Guildhall Library, 5 Aldermanbury, London EC2V 7HH</p> <p>Website 02073321868</p>	1857-1976, 1979-1983.
Portsmouth	<p>The National Archives Naval Historical Branch HM Naval Base PP20 Portsmouth England PO1 3HL</p> <p>Website 02392 725 297</p>	1857-1862, 1865, 1876, 1883, 1885, 1894-1895, 1897, 1899-1913, 1916-1924, 1926-1935, 1937-1939, 1947-1957.
Surrey	<p>The National Archives Kew, Richmond TW9 4DU</p> <p>Website 020 8876 3444</p>	1857, 1859-1864, 1866-1868, 1870, 1872-1875, 1879, 1881, 1884, 1889, 1894, 1896, 1901, 1908, 1913, 1925, 1933, 1949.
Wales	<p>Gwynedd Archives Service – Dolgellau Dolgellau Library Bala Road, Dolgellau LL40 2YF</p> <p>Website</p>	1857, 1859-1864, 1866-1868, 1870, 1872-1875, 1879, 1881, 1884, 1889, 1894, 1896, 1901, 1908, 1913, 1925, 1933, 1949.