



Making a search using the Lloyd's Register of Ships

In order to make a search, knowing the name of the ship is essential, as the *Lloyd's Register of Ships* lists vessels in alphabetical order. Nevertheless, *Register Books* published after 1876, contain the *List of Ship Owners* which could be useful if the only information known is the name of the owner. Furthermore, *Register Books* published after 1886 contain the list of *Late Names of Ships*, which is useful to discover previous names of the vessel, or to find records with the newly updated name.

Since 1880 all vessels worldwide have been included, irrespective of whether they were inspected by Lloyd's Register, provided they were sea-going and weighed over 100 ton(nes) gross.

Vessels would remain in the *Register Books* until the end of their service, when a notation would usually mark if they were sunk, wrecked, broken up, hulked, etc.

Once a vessel has been identified in the *Register Books* it is simply a case of tracing the vessel through the previous or following editions, noting any interesting changes to the vessel's characteristics, i.e. change of ownership, flag, or name. The easiest way to do this is to use 'posted' editions of the *Register*

Books. Posted *Register Books* were returned to the Lloyd's Register Printing House on a weekly basis, where a team of 'posters' would update them with all of the previous week's changes to ship details. They also added new ships or ships which had changed their name, to the supplement bound within.

The *Register Books* prior to 1890 simply state 'wrecked', 'lost' or 'hulked' next to the name of the ship. After 1890 the posting also includes the month and year of incident, enabling researchers to consult the corresponding section of the *Lloyd's Register Casualty Returns*. These were first published for the second quarter of 1890. The RMS *Titanic*, for example, has the posting 'struck an iceberg 4.12'. If the researcher then looks at the *Lloyd's Register Casualty Returns* for the second quarter of 1912, further details of the tragedy can be found.

If unsure of the exact date of build of the vessel the best course of action is to make an educated guess using available information. The first entry record of the desired vessel can be picked up by researching previous editions of the *Register Books*.

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