

Norfolk Record Office Information Leaflet 28

Great Yarmouth Maritime Sources

1. Introduction

The main sources relating to the merchant navy are at The National Archives (formerly the Public Record Office) Ruskin Avenue, Kew, Richmond, TW9 4DU (tel. 020 8876 3444, website <<http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk>>. The Norfolk Record Office also has a large number of relevant records including some material among the Great Yarmouth Borough archives: this leaflet summarises these. NRO document references are given in brackets. In almost all cases more detailed information can be found in the Norfolk Record Office lists and indexes.

2. The National Archives

The National Archives holds many records related to the merchant shipping industry, many of which are described in their free leaflets. These leaflets are also available on The National Archives website.

3. Norfolk Record Office

3.1 Borough archives

- Borough court rolls including local customs accounts, c. 1312-1700, and conveyances of ships, early fourteenth century (see list Y/C4; some available on microfilm).
- Accounts of customs and dues, seventeenth-nineteenth centuries (see list Y/C 26).
- Registers of freemen, 1429-1892 (see lists Y/C 22, available on microfiche, and Y/C4)
- Registers of apprenticeships, 1563-1856 (see lists Y/C 22, available on microfiche, and Y/C 4).
- Admiralty Court acts, 1712-1835 and papers, 1698-1836 (see list Y/C 16).
- Port and Haven Commissioners' records, eighteenth-twentieth centuries, including some registers of ships, harbourmaster's reports, accounts of tolls (see list Y/PH).

For more information about these records see *Guide to the Great Yarmouth Borough Records* (Norfolk Record Office, 1971).

3.2 Public records

Registrar-General of Seamen & Shipping

- Registers of merchant shipping, 1834-1994 (P/SH/Y/1-19, on microfilms MF 827-833, and P/SH/Y/20-60).
- Ships' registration files (mainly for small vessels), 1875-1994 (P/SH/Y/66-971)
- Registers of fishing boats, 1940-1956 and 1985-1989 (P/SH/Y/61-65)
- Register of apprentices, 1884-1907 (P/SH/W/7, on microfilm MF 837).
- Registers of crews engaged, 1881-1913 (P/SH/W/4, on microfilm MF 837).

3.3 Other sources

Pre-1700

- Royal Customs - Yarmouth Collector's accounts, 1568-92 (MS 12115, 30E1).
- Bargain and sale of keel, 1585 (MS 2166, 2E1).
- Bond re *Mary Susan* in coal trade, 1612 (MS 12286, 31F2).
- Pengelly letters (between a London merchant and his Yarmouth agents), 1656-74 (Y/L 13; Y/PP 7/1, Y/PP/19, Y/PP 27; MC 44, MC 265, MC 375, MC 388, MC 411, MC 484; BRA 529).
- Copy of Act settling differences between Great and Little Yarmouth about loading and unloading goods, 1667 (MC 950/1).
- Records of Abraham Bayly of Great Yarmouth, wool merchant, 1684-96 (BR 79).
- Sailor's appointment of attorney, 1691 (Y/D 41/51).
- Miscellaneous letters (photocopies) inc. re shipping lead, 1699, capture of W D Palmer's ship the *James*, 1795, Manby's rocket, 1829, and shipping herring to Italy, 1840-6 (Y/PP 7/1-20).

1700-1800

- Jack Secker, sailor, autobiography, 1730-55 (Y/D 41/105; Rye MS 71).
- Receipts for customs on tea and wine, 1755-6 (COL 2/51).

- Table of imports to Yarmouth, 1756-7 (COL 7/41).
- Deeds of sale, *Providence*, 1759, *Two Betseys*, 1781, *Christopher*, 1785, *Sarah*, 1786, *William*, 1793 (1785-6 sales by Thomas Douglas jr. boatbuilder of Southtown) (MS 1785, 1786, 1794-1796, 1E4).
- William Youell's diary (includes mercantile matters) 1765-1815 (Y/D 87).
- Autobiography of Samuel Ward who worked as a ropemaker and a customs watchman in Great Yarmouth, c. 1775 (COL 7/13).
- Appointment of attorney re the *Lion* trading to Italy, 1776 (Y/D 53/1).
- Letters of marque for the *Hunter* of Yarmouth, 1781 (Y/D 18/2).
- Journal of George Errington, herring fisherman, 1787-1828 (BR 137).

1800-1900

- Bills of Sale of various Yarmouth vessels, 1806-54 (Y/D 16/747-50, 760-8; Y/D 51/1706, 1712, 1902, 1907).
- Letter relating to Yarmouth seamen captive in France, 1813 (Y/D 72).
- Letter describing herring fishery, 1816 (FX 8).
- Ship *Anthony* insurance policy, 1820 (Y/D 14/13).
- Papers of Captain Victor T Howes of Gorleston 1823-76, inc. account of shipwreck in Cochin China, 1848, papers re the '*Clyde*' troopship's voyages, 1867-70 (Y/D 24/1-65).
- Fellowes, Yarmouth, shipbuilders, deeds, 1828-95, inc. partnership articles; accounts, 1828-95 (Y/D 16/462-91; Y/L 17; Y/D 23; Y/D 96; BR 36).
- Accounts and minutes of Haven Commissioners, 1833-5 (MC 324/51).
- MS account of escape from shipwreck of Samuel Brock, a Yarmouth beachman, 1835 (Y/D 40).
- Bill of Sale (mortgage) of vessels by Turnell's Company (beachmen), 1838 (Y/D 16/771).
- Petition of merchant seamen against employing boys on vessels, 1843 (Y/L 15/21).
- (incomplete) Company articles of (?) Coull's Company, (beachmen), (?)1844 (Y/D 51/1912).

- Caister Beach Company accounts, 1840s-1940s (microfilm copy on MF102/7).
- Port and grain returns, 1844 (Microfilm copy on MF/RO 10-12).
- Papers of Preston family as vice-consuls, 1844-61 (Y/D 2).
- Records of the Press family of Great Yarmouth, merchant mariners, 1847-1964 (BR 66).
- References to herring fishery, Caister beachmen, shipwrecks in diary of John Humphrey, 1848-73 (MC 1193/1).
- Log of brig *Margaret Cook* of Yarmouth, 1850-2 (MC 661).
- Description of Battle of Sveaborg, 1855 (Y/D 27/14).
- Yarmouth Shipwrecked Sailors' Home, minutes etc., 1858-1964 (Y/D 54; SO 4).
- Papers re loss of brig *Laurel* going to Peru, 1859 (MS 2318, 2E2).
- Beechings, Yarmouth, shipbuilders, deeds, 1870-1913, inc. partnership articles (Y/D 16/246-71).
- Bills of sale for *Excelsior*, 1870, and *Dawn of Day*, 1882 (MC 1177).
- Statement of the general and particular average by the brig '*Nil Desperandum*' from Archangel to Yarmouth, 1872 (MS 5729, 18F6).
- Crew agreement for *Dawn of Day*, 1882 (MC 1182/1).
- May Gale Relief Fund accounts, 1860-74 (Y/D 41/65).
- Bill of sale for *Rachael*, 1884 (MC 1182/2).
- Sale particulars, Hull and Newcastle steampacket wharf, and of blockmaker's shop, 1888 (MC 1145/2).
- Records of F J W Salmon, fishing boat owner and auctioneer, 1889-93 (BR 92).
- Log of *Alber'* mission ship, 1892-4 (Y/D 24/67).
- Yarmouth Fishermen's Widows' and Orphans' Fund minutes etc., 1895-1967 (Y/D 77/1-5).
- Garson Blake Ltd., builders', coal and general merchants, accounts, inc. steamers journal, 1895-1946 (Y/D 81).

After 1900

- Records of Jewsons, Yarmouth, timber merchants, twentieth century (BR 24).
- Photograph of Cossey's boatyard in Vauxhall, c. 1900 (FX 58).
- Records of J G Gibbs, wherry operators, 1908-13 (BR 182).
- Gus Lee and Boswell, boiler makers, ledger, 1908-44, and photos (Y/D 64).
- Records of Bloomfield's, fish merchants, 1911-59 (BR 51).
- Yarmouth Boatowners' Association minutes etc., 1915-65 (Y/D 77/6-10).
- Yarmouth Herring Salesmen's Association minutes etc., 1925-62 (Y/D 77/11-13).
- Record of war service of HMS *Norfolk* and HMS *Gorleston*, 1941-45 (MC 572/1).
- Papers re history of the Belle steamers and other maritime matters (BR 191).
- Delf Collection of lantern slides includes wherries and ships (MC 530/9-11).
- Photographs of Great Yarmouth harbour (MC 575).
- Records of Maconochies Kippers Ltd, 1945-57 (BR 308).



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Produced by:

Norfolk Record Office
The Archive Centre
Martineau Lane
Norwich
NR1 2DQ

Tel: 01603 222599
Fax: 01603 761885
E-mail: norfrec@norfolk.gov.uk
Website: <http://archives.norfolk.gov.uk/>



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