

Crew Lists Research Guide Part 1 (Updated February 2021)

See also: *Crew Lists Research Guide part 2*, & *Passenger Lists Research Guide*

Archives in Louth Co Archives:

- P/164: engineer's logbook for SS Bessbrook of the Dundalk & Newry Steampacket Company, 1904; and a logbook for the Brigantine "Example" c1860s (typescript of log from 'Example' in Tempest's Annual 1967)
- P/186: a Drogheda ledger dating to 1723-1730. Entries provide details of invoices for cargoes of various ships such as the "Charity of Drogheda" or the "Patience of Bristol" that docked in Drogheda in the early 18th century and were subsequently sold on to local merchants.
- P/256: Old Dundalk Society's Photograph Collection: contains some photographs of ships
- DHC/: Dundalk Harbour Commissioners archive collection. Largely contains financial records, minute books, and some legislation. Does not contain crew lists or passenger lists. Contains shipping documents for various ships probably kept by the Registrar of Shipping, Custom House, Dundalk, 1869-1917, reference DHC/MGT/007/

Glossary of Terms/Acronyms:

- NAI = National Archives of Ireland
- NMM = National Maritime Museum, Greenwich, England
- TNA = The National Archives, Kew, London (formerly the PRO in Kew)

Crew Lists & Websites:

- Sailors signed an agreement every 6 months (a renewal) and it is these agreements from which the crew lists derive from. Sailors may have worked on a ship for two weeks or several months at a time. A crew agreement provides particulars about a vessel, including the port of registry, tonnage, form of propulsion, owner(s) and intended voyage. It also provides information on each crew member including the person's name, year and place of birth, capacity, previous vessel served on, and date of signing on and off the vessel.
- All Irish sailors working on British owned ships would have been registered in Cardiff in the "Registrar General of Shipping and Seamen, the Agreements and Account of Crew and Official Logbooks" for British Empire vessels from 1861 to 1913. Records were transferred from the Registrar General of Shipping and Seamen's Office in Cardiff. Due to the huge bulk of the records and because the population censuses from 1861 record those aboard British merchant ships, the PRO in Kew (now TNA) retained 10% in addition to any surviving records from before 1860 (collection reference BT/98) and celebrated vessels such as the Titanic, the Great Britain (BT/100). The remaining 90% got transferred to several institutions:
 - The Memorial University of Newfoundland (see <http://www.mun.ca/mha/> , contact: Mrs Heather Wareham, archivist, email: mha@mun.ca) bought approximately 70% and had them microfilmed and now hold them in their Maritime History Archive (MHA) – records date from 1863-1939. You can request Newfoundland's MHA to do a search on your behalf, however, you must have the ships name and number, and a year as crew agreements are filed by the year in which the voyage terminated in a British port (there is a first half and second half within each year). See their website for further details required. They can provide you with a photocopy of the agreement (subject to a fee). The agreement will also give you the name of the previous ship which is useful for further searching;
 - Local repositories in the UK & Ireland took those relating to their area (Newfoundland's MHA website contains a list of these repositories);
 - The National Maritime Museum at Greenwich, England (see <https://www.rmg.co.uk/national-maritime-museum>, then go to explore online, look for online collections) hold records for 1861-1862 and the years ending in "5" (ie 1865, 1875, 1885, 1895, and 1905. In the future, 1915, 1925 and 1935 will be transferred to them from TNA). The NMM have an online catalogue (type in the collection code RSS/ into the search field, choose the sub-collection level, and choose '1 – Public Records Central Administration' in the section of the catalogue).
- Official ship numbers can be found in Mercantile Navy Lists or Lloyd's Registers and Newfoundland's MHA have a copy. Llyods of London have a list of ships with their ship number because every ship was insured there.

Louth County Archives Service www.louthcoco.ie

- **Registers for Irish ships.** The Superintendent Mercantile Marine Office (email: mmo@transport.ie, tel: 01-6783480) hold crew lists and records on merchant vessels under the Irish flag / Irish Flagged Vessels from the 1970s onwards whereas the National Archives in Dublin (NAI, contact archivist Brian Donnelly) hold those dating from 1860 to 1921 for ships registered in what is now the south of Ireland. These include crew lists and agreements with seamen regarding wage rates, conditions of service etc and include Dundalk registered ships. They are available to search online at <http://www.genealogy.nationalarchives.ie/>. There may also be some held in the UK National Archives (TNA). It was the Customs for whom these records were originally created. You need to know the name of the vessel as they are listed under each one. The family may have a seafarer's discharge book (where they write in their service and dates they signed on and off). The <https://www.irishseamensrelativesassociation.com/> website advises:
 - **National Archives of Ireland:** Please note, Irish crew lists and ships logs are held at the National Archive, Bishop Street, Dublin 1. It is necessary to consult with the **Superintendent Mercantile Marine Office**, at the Department of Transport, Room G26, Leeson Lane, Dublin 2, Ireland. Tel : [00 353 1] 6783480 - Fax: [00 353 1] 6783489 - email mmo@transport.ie for permission to access. The archive will then need 24 hours notice to enable them to produce the relevant files.
 - **Public Record Office Kew / National Archives UK** Online catalogue Merchant Seamens Logs and Crew lists.
 - **The General Register Office (Oifig An Ard-Chláráitheora):** Queries about records relating to deaths of seamen lost on Irish Ships should in the first instance be directed to the General Register Office, Joyce House, 8-11 Lombard Street East, Dublin 2. Tel:+353 1 635 40 00. In the event that problems do arise about the registration of a seamens death after contact with the General Registry Office, you should contact the Irish Seamens Relatives Association [1939-46] at email: mulvanypeterie@yahoo.co.uk.
 - **British Medals:** Enquiries about Medal entitlement for service on British Registered Vessels during the War are dealt with through the Marine Safety Agency, Registry of Shipping and Seamen, Anchor Court, Ocean Way, Keen Road, Cardiff, CF24 5JW - Tel No: 029 2044 8800-Fax No: 029 2022 8820 . E-mail: rss@mcga.gov.uk.
 - **The National Maritime Museum Greenwich:** The Caird Library is the largest and most significant maritime reference library of its kind in the world. The collections cover every aspect of maritime affairs, containing important and unique materials which are freely available for consultation. They also have a large selection of Shipping records. Developed by the National Maritime Museum, PORT is an online catalogue of maritime-related Internet resources. Every resource has been selected including the website of the Irish Seamen's Relatives Association [1939-46] and described by a librarian or subject specialist. Services and materials developed by the Museum's Centre for Research are also available on the site.
 - **The Maritime History Archive (MHA):** Memorial University of Newfoundland, took those Crew Lists not taken by any other institution for the years 1863-1972. The MHA has published a Guide to the Agreements and Crew Lists: Series II, 1863-1912 (in three volumes) and a Guide to the Agreements and Crew Lists: Series II, 1913-1938. Microfiche copies of all these are available at the Public Record Office, Kew. Click onto the website of the Public Record office at Kew to establish what shipping records were transferred. Memorial University Maritime History Archive collects and preserves original documents and copies of documents relating to the history of sea based activities in the north Atlantic region. The archive is located in the Henrietta Harvey (Mathematics) building on the campus of Memorial University of Newfoundland in St. John's, Newfoundland. Mailing address is...Maritime History Archive, Memorial University of Newfoundland, St. John's, NFA1C 5S7, Phone: + 709-737-8428/9, Fax: + 709-737-3123. Principal site for records.
 - Others on website.
- Irish Mariners, <http://www.irishmariners.ie/>, contains an online index of Irish seamen active 1918-1921. Email: davids@irishmariners.ie he is doing work in 2009 on Dundalk crewmen for an exhibition in 2010.
- Some of the Dundalk and Newry SP ships were registered in Newry so their crew lists are in PRONI in Belfast, see <http://www.proni.gov.uk/>. Some Dundalk men served with Joseph Fisher colliers which are also Newry registered.
- The National Maritime Museum in Dun Laoghaire should have some list (staff are voluntary). See <https://www.mariner.ie/>.
- **Co Museum, Dundalk:** hold a collection of shipping cards [Swan's notes] which record ships that traded in and out of Dundalk. They refer to the journeys of the ships, type of ship, [ship's number] and the cargo. However, there is little or no reference to the crews (maybe just the captains' names). The Museum does not hold lists of sailors or crewmen.

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- Mr Charley McCarthy, tel: 087-2729999, has crew lists for a small quantity ships that worked out of Dundalk (and may have been registered in Dundalk) such as the Earl of Erne, SS Carlingford, SS Jessie, SS Dundalk, Margaret Lockington and others under the B&I line. He also has a list of ship names (not crew lists) for approximately 150 sailing ships, and 50 steamships (however, the list is not in one complete register, but scattered throughout various records). All from 1900 onwards. He intends on depositing them in Louth Co Archives but wants to sort them out first. He is happy to do searches for those tracing an ancestor who worked on the ships; however, they really need to have the ship's name (and number and year).
- **TNA website:** Irish in the Navy: Irish soldiers and sailors had their pensions paid by the Royal Chelsea Hospital or by Greenwich Hospital. Records of these pensions, 1842-1862 and 1882-1883, are in [WO 22/141-205](#) and [WO 22/209-225](#) . They can be used to trace changes of residence and dates of death. There are separate naval records for Irishmen in nominations to serve in the Irish Coastguard, 1821-1849 in [ADM 175/74](#) and [ADM 175/81](#) , indexed in [ADM 175/99-100](#) . Sea Fencibles were fishermen and boatmen who served part-time under the command of Naval officers. They were recruited for local defence, especially when invasion was threatened. Musters and pay lists for Ireland are in [ADM 28/110-144](#) .
- **Crew List Index Project:** <http://www.crewlist.org.uk/> CLIP was set up to improve access to the records of British merchant seafarers of the late 19th century and has gathered the largest database of entries from crew lists
- <https://liverpool.gov.uk/libraries/archives-family-history/>: Liverpool Record Office holds the records of numerous shipping companies including the Booth Line, CT Bowring & Co Ltd, Thos & Jno Brocklebank, China Navigation Co Ltd, Lancashire Shipping Co Ltd, and the White Star Line. There are also the logbooks of a number of slave ships, the records of numerous marine insurers and the minutes of the Mersey Ship Repairers' Association.
- <http://www.iwai.ie/index.php> - "In 1871 the company was assimilated into the Dundalk and Newry Steam Packet Company, which had a new Newry registered steamer "Bessbrook" built in 1877 followed in 1892 by the S. S. "Iveagh" also registered in Newry. For almost 60 years this innovative little company operated regular cross channel passenger services from the Steam Packet Quay in the Albert Basin to Liverpool and Glasgow"
- http://www.irishships.com/dundalk_port.html - contains photographs of ships in Dundalk Port

Publications:

- Nicholas Cox, 'The Records of the Registrar General of Shipping and Seamen', Maritime History, Vol II, No 2, 1972
- K. Matthews, 'Crew Lists, Agreements, and Official Logs of the British Empire, 1863-1913 now in possession of the Maritime History Group, Memorial University, St John's, Newfoundland', Business History, Vol XVI, 1974
- 'Steam powered shipping in the port of Dundalk' by Allan B Swan in Tempest's Annual 1968, copies available in Louth Co Archives and Louth Co Library
- 'Example' brigantine of Dundalk 1852-1889 – typescript of logbook dating to 1860s in Tempest's Annual 1967, copies available in Louth Co Archives and Louth Co Library
- Dundalk Harbour Improvements in the 19th Century by Harold O'sullivan, CLAHS, Vol XXIV, No 4, 2000
- Dundalk Democrat newspapers, available in Louth Co Library
- 'The Newry ship canal 1850-2003: a brief history of its origin, decline and renaissance' by Sean Patterson, contact <http://www.iwai.ie/index.php> , as it was available there

Shipwrecks - Publications:

- Shipwreck Inventory of Ireland - Louth, Meath, Dublin & Wicklow, by Carl Brady, Wordwell Books, €35. It covers many shipwrecks along the east coast including coverage of the Mary Stoddart in Dundalk Bay in 1858. Available in bookshops. See also <https://www.archaeology.ie/underwater-archaeology/wreck-viewer>
- **'Lloyd's List, 1741-1914** is a marine newspaper that was first published by Lloyd's of London in 1741. From 1884 - 1914 it was published as *Shipping Mercantile Gazette and Lloyd's List*. The daily publication includes information on vessel movements and casualties. From 1839-1927 the *Index to Lloyd's List* provides a reference to the entry in the list by name of vessel. Other published material on shipwrecks held at the Maritime History Archive includes *Disasters at Sea During the Age of Steam, 1824-1962* Charles Hocking. (London: Lloyd's Register of Shipping, 1989); *Lloyd's War Losses, the second World War, Volume 1*. (London: Lloyd's Register of Shipping, 1989); *Syren and Shipping Mercantile War Loss Book, Merchant vessels lost in World War 1. Lloyd's Register, [1764-1995]*; *Shipwreck Index of the British Isles*, Richard and Bridget Larn. Volumes 1 and 2, (London: Lloyd's Register of Shipping, 1995). The fee for researching shipwrecks is \$40 per hour and 50 cents for each page of information printed from the database'. Taken from Newfoundland's MHA website, <http://www.mun.ca/mha/> .