

Crew List Research Guide Part 2 (Dundalk Port & Drogheda Port)

See also: *Crew Lists Research Guide part 1*, & *Passenger Lists Research Guide*

The purpose of this Research Guide is to provide some information on Dundalk Port and Drogheda Port, such as names of ships that traded out of the ports, to assist researchers in sourcing and using crew lists

A **merchant ship** is a ship that carries cargo and passengers during peacetime and during wars the same ships are auxiliaries to the navies of their countries. Most countries have fleets of merchant ships, however, some sail under 'flags of convenience' such as that of Panama, and are owned by other countries. Merchant ships are broken down into several categories: dry cargo ships (bulk carriers and container ships which carry goods from port to port); tankers (transport liquids: fuel, chemicals, gas, water in bulk); specialized ships (eg for wheeled machinery or cars); coasters (smaller ships carrying cargo on coast-wise trade and trade on the same island, not for ocean-crossing – they have a shallow hull and get through reefs that larger cargo ships cannot); and passenger ships (cruise ships, ferries).

Glossary of Terms/Acronyms:

PS = paddle steamer

SP = Steam Packet

SS = screw steamship

TSS = twin screw steamship

Dundalk Port:

'**Dundalk Port** has a long tradition of shipbuilding and registration. The Port also has a long history of trading in different products with traffic through the port having consisted of gypsum, perlite, sand, peat, salt, scrap, pit props, cattle, fertilizers, machinery, paper, wood and general cargo to name a few. The First vessel recorded as trading to Dundalk was the "Trinitic" which sailed from Liverpool to Dundalk in March, 1580. The year 1646 saw a grant of "perfect freedom of trade" to Dundalk'¹.

In 1827 the St George Steam Packet Company of Liverpool (subsequently became the Cork SP Co) operated a service to Dundalk. They employed three small paddle steamers: the PS Earl of Roden, the PS Solway, and the PS Magdalena. In 1840, the Dundalk Harbour Commissioners were established and Neal Kelly founded the Dundalk Steam Packet Company. The Dundalk Company began its service to Liverpool with the PS Glasgow in 1837 transporting livestock. However, many thought the charges for this service were excessive and in 1856, a rival company, the Dundalk and Midland Steamship Company (often referred to as the Russell Steamship Company) was founded. In 1871 the Dundalk SP Co and the Newry SP Co amalgamated to form the Dundalk & Newry Steam Packet Company (they were later taken over by the British and Irish Steamship Company in 1926).

'In 1968 the B&I ended its Dundalk - Newry - Liverpool service. The last 4 ships on this service were M.V. Dundalk, M.V. Inniscarra, M.V. Wicklow & M.V. Kilkenny. In 2002 Dundalk Port became a semi state limited company owned by the state. Captain Frank Allen is Chief Executive of Dundalk Port Company'.

Dundalk Ships:

The following list provides some names of Dundalk ships, but is by no means a complete list. Many of those for the 19thC have been taken from Tempest's Annual 1968:

1. PS Earl of Roden – small wooden PS, Liverpool & Dundalk Steam Navigation Co established in Liverpool owned this in 1827, who then became St George Steam Packet Company of Liverpool (subsequently became Cork SP Co) (carried 600 emigrants in 1830, exclusive of cargo)
2. PS Solway – small wooden PS owned by St George SP Co (carried 300 emigrants in 1830, exclusive of cargo)
3. PS Magdalena – small wooden PS owned by St George SP Co (carried 500 emigrants in 1830, exc of cargo)
4. PS Glasgow – first steamer owned by Dundalk Steam Packet Company in 1837
5. PS Finn MacCoull – wooden PS bought in 1838 by the Dundalk SP Co (sold in 1846)
6. PS Dundalk – iron PS bought in 1842 by Dundalk SP Co (ran to Liverpool; between Glasgow & Derry in 1855)
7. PS Countess of Erne – bought in 1858 for the Dundalk SP Co (served on Lough Erne 1842 - 1859)

¹ Extract taken from the history page on <http://www.dundalkport.com/>

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8. PS Pride of Erin – built in 1848 for Dundalk SP Co
9. PS Fair Trader – owned by Dundalk SP Co in 1848 (previously owned by Drogheda Paddle Steam Ship Co since 1829)
10. Example – brigantine of Dundalk, 1852-1889
11. PS Earl of Erne – built for Dundalk SP Co in 1855 (sailed the Irish Sea for 70 years, carried passengers, cargo)
12. James Watt – first steam paddle tug-boat bought by Dundalk Harbour Commissioners in 1852
13. PS Enterprise – built for the Dundalk & Midland Steamship Co in 1856
14. PS Independence – built for Dundalk & Midland Steamship Co in 1857
15. Warree – schooner of Dundalk around 1857
16. SS Despatch – owned by Dundalk SP Co in 1858, sold 1862
17. SS Mystery – bought in 1860 by Dundalk SP Co (wrecked off Scotland in 1868)
18. PS Emerald Isle – built in 1862 for Dundalk SP Co, sold about 1894
19. SS Amphion – bought in 1868 by Dundalk SP Co
20. Sam Turner – tug-boat in Dundalk around 1868
21. Earl of Belfast – schooner bought by Newry SP Co and renamed *Newry* around 1869
22. SS Bessbrook – built for the Dundalk & Newry SP Co in 1877 (designed for live stock trade, could take passengers), registered in Newry
23. Paragon, Orion – two Dundalk schooners lost at sea in approx 1884
24. SS Fetlar – built for the Dundalk & Newry SP Co in 1888 (originally known as Cavalier)
25. SS Iveagh – built for the Dundalk & Newry SP Co in 1892 (worked until post 1926), registered in Newry
26. TSS Dundalk – bought by the Dundalk & Newry SP Co in 1899 (sunk by a German submarine in 1918)
27. Liberator – tug-boat in Dundalk around 1908
28. SS Kittiwake – bought by the Dundalk & Newry SP Co in 1919
29. SS Lady Kildare – serviced Dundalk around 1928, owned by B&I
30. SS Culzean – sailed in 1928, belonged to B&I
31. Lady Carlow – on B&I sailing schedule on behalf of the Dundalk & Newry [SP Co?] in 1930
32. Lady Kerry – on B&I sailing schedule on behalf of the Dundalk & Newry [SP Co?] in 1930
33. Margaret Lockington coaster ship – owned by [Samuel Lockington, Dundalk?], operated during WWII period
34. Kalisco tug boat (later called Naomh Breandun) – in operation during WWII period
35. Manco [coaster ship?] – in operation during WWII period
36. SS Carlingford
37. SS Jessie
38. Naomh Breandun – steamtug owned by Dundalk Harbour Commissioners bought in 1922
39. MV Dundalk, MV Inniscarra, MV Wicklow & MV Kilkenny – all owned by B&I in the 1950s/60s, serviced Dundalk - Newry - Liverpool

Drogheda Port:

The following extracts regarding trading are taken from the history page on www.droghedaport.ie:

‘During the 15th Century, **Drogheda** was a “Staple-Town” which “was a fixed place through which exports of wool, woollfells and hides were compulsorily directed”... Drogheda merchants traded mostly with other Irish ports. Goods were shipped on a regular basis to Cork, Kilkenny, Wexford, Kinsale, Youghal and also to Ulster ports such as Carrickfergus...the town did have extensive trading connections with Flanders, Gascony, Bordeaux, Bristol and Chester. Ships from Drogheda sailed to Gdansk in 1384, Iceland in 1458 and Lisbon in 1480”. Imports included wine, iron and salt. Agricultural produce was the major export, including fish, hides and corn. Throughout the 16th Century Drogheda traded with Liverpool on a wide scale. The main export was linen yard and between 1565 and 1598 135 sailings left Drogheda with yarn for Liverpool. In 1683 Drogheda exported wool, linen, yarn, wheat, rye, oats and beef to Liverpool, Minehead and Dover.

In 1790 an important Act of George III c.39 gave a grant of £600 per annum whereby the Drogheda Harbour Commissioners were set up. Drogheda was an important centre for the linen trade throughout the 18th Century and in 1785-1808, Drogheda’s economy peaked. These were also the years of the great merchants families of Drogheda such as Brodigan, Bellew, Dardis, Hardman, Scholes, St. George Smith and Ball. The two most important commodities for export to Liverpool and Glasgow were grain and linen. Other exports between 1780-1820 included butter, beef and port. Animals became an important part of the town’s trade during the 1820s and 1830s. Imports during this period included coal, timber, iron, bark and rock salt; luxurious imports included tea, tobacco, sugar and wine.

In the 19th Century “Drogheda had a regular passenger steamer service to Liverpool. The steamers would sail initially 2/3 times a week and were the first in the world to have electric light on board. The service further

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expanded some years later to become a daily service and include Glasgow on the route...The ships carried a mixture of cattle and passengers... The first steamer in 1826 was called the "Town of Drogheda", and many others followed...Many ships were also built in the port and Grendons foundry which was established in 1835 employed up to 600 people and produced many steel ships which were launched on the Boyne. In the 19th century Drogheda became one of the ports through which thousands of Irish people emigrated from famine and out to the new world".

Some Drogheda ships:

1. La Magdeleine: in 1340, it was blown by a storm towards Galway when she was returning from Bordeaux with wine
2. The Mary, The Katherine, The Anne: carried herrings, dried white fish and salmon to England, and hawks and falcons to Europe (Chester Customs Accounts)
3. The Town of Drogheda and The Fair Trader: first two steamers of the Drogheda Steampacket Company (formed 1826) in use in 1830 which operated from Drogheda to Liverpool and Glasgow.
4. The Irishman, Faugh-a-Ballagh and The Brian Boru: later additions of the Drogheda Steampacket Co, also operated from Drogheda to Liverpool and Glasgow
5. The Eagle, The Experience, The Unity and The Lady Florence: the vast majority of working vessels during the 19th Century were sailing ships. These were four of the 30 that worked from the port of Drogheda in 1830.
6. The Tredagth, Nora Creina, The Kathleen Mavourneen and The Iverna: steamers which carried passengers from Drogheda to Liverpool in the 1880s
7. The Colleen Bawn and The Mellifont: launched in 1903 under the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway Company. Remained on the Drogheda services until 1928. Cattle dealers were frequent travellers on these boats; their cargo was unloaded at Birkenhead.
8. The Mouse: ship launched in 1878 by Grendon's Foundry (shipbuilding company)