

## Infosheet No. 12 Shipwrecks - Possible sources of information

There is no centralised source of information relating to shipwrecks that occurred before 1741. Information can be sought locally, or secondary sources, such as *A checklist of narratives of shipwrecks and disasters at sea to 1860*, with summaries, notes and comments by Keith Huntress (Ames: Iowa State University Press, 1979).

Between 1875 and 1904 a list of vessels removed from the British register, whilst the current issue was going to press, was published

in the *Mercantile Navy List* giving brief reasons why. 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.

<p><b>Information Services</b> <b>Lloyd's Register</b> 71 Fenchurch Street London EC3M 4BS T +44 (0)20 7423 2475/2531 E <a href="mailto:histinfo@lr.org">histinfo@lr.org</a> <a href="http://www.lr.org">www.lr.org</a></p>	<p>Early 'posted' editions of the <i>Lloyd's Register of Ships</i> often include the fate of a vessel, the entry being stamped 'Collision', 'Foundered', 'Condemned', &amp;c, sometimes the month and year ('3.89') is added. Brief ship details and date/place of loss have been recorded in the <i>Quarterly Casualty Returns</i> since July 1890. Our small specialist library includes some books on shipwrecks. We are open to public from Monday to Friday between the hours of 09:30 and 16:30 and close for lunch between 12:00 and 13:00 hrs.</p>
<p><b>Wrecks Office</b> United Kingdom Hydrographic Office Admiralty Way Taunton Somerset TA1 2DN T +44 (0)1823 337900 ext 3308/3701 F +44 (0)1823 284077 E <a href="mailto:wrecks@ukho.gov.uk">wrecks@ukho.gov.uk</a></p>	<p>Provides an information service for commercial, private, MOD, and other Governmental departmental enquiries. Has information on all post 1913 marine casualties occurring in continental shelf areas except USA and Australian coastal waters. Search fee charged.</p>

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<p><b>Shipwreck &amp; Marine</b> <b>Richard &amp; Bridget Larn</b> Tamale, Buzza Hill Road St Mary's Isles of Scilly, Cornwall TR21 0NQ T +44 (0)1720 423679 F +44 (0)1720 423679 E <a href="mailto:larn@shipwreck-marine.devon.co.uk">larn@shipwreck-marine.devon.co.uk</a></p>	<p>This computerised wreck index, started in 1978, currently holds a record of some 100,000 lost vessels. It will eventually record every known shipping loss around the coast of the United Kingdom and the Republic of Ireland, from about 1100 AD to the present day and represent a unique archive. Unlike the shipwreck index of the Hydrographic Department of the Navy, which is concerned primarily with obstructions that might prove a hazard to shipping, and whose record goes back to only the mid-1800's, this private index is an historical record of lost vessels. It is maintained on a county basis, which when complete will be unique to this country.</p> <p><b>Send SAE with enquiries.</b></p>
<p><b>Lloyd's Marine Collection</b> Guildhall Library Aldermanbury London EC2P 2EJ T +44 (0)20 7332 1868</p>	<p>Information on marine casualties and shipping movements worldwide back to circa 1740. The Collection includes <i>Lloyd's List</i>, which from 1741 provided a daily record of information on shipping casualties received in London. As Lloyd's (that is Lloyd's of London, not Lloyd's Register) intelligence network grew, this source became increasingly comprehensive, not only for British vessels and vessels wrecked in British waters, but for shipping losses worldwide. A variety of indexes are available at the Guildhall Library. Further information on this and other sources of marine records compiled by Lloyd's of London can be found in Declan Barriskill's <i>Guide to the Lloyd's Marine Collection</i> 2nd Edition (London: Guildhall Library, 1994).</p>
<p><b>The Salvage Association</b> 5<sup>th</sup> Floor 37-39 Lime Street London EC3M 7AY T +44 (0)20 7648 9650 E <a href="mailto:salvage@wreckage.org">salvage@wreckage.org</a> <a href="http://www.wreckage.org">www.wreckage.org</a></p>	<p>Undertakes tracing of ownership of hull/cargo of ships sunk other than by wartime activity, circa 1880 onwards. Arranges transfer of ownership of wreck, abandoned by original owners, to the insurers.</p>

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<p><b>Receiver of Wreck</b> Maritime and Coastguard Agency Bay 1/07 Spring Place 105 Commercial Road Southampton SO15 1EG T +44 (0)23 8032 9474 F +44 (0)23 8032 9477 E <a href="mailto:row@mcga.gov.uk">row@mcga.gov.uk</a> <a href="http://www.mcga.gov.uk">www.mcga.gov.uk</a></p>	<p>Advice on what to do if you discover a wreck, as well as information on the ownership of wreck and legal requirements.</p>
<p><b>Trinity House</b> Trinity Square Tower Hill EC3N 4DH T +44 (0)20 7481 6931 F +44 (0)20 77024983 E <a href="mailto:venue.enquiries@thls.org">venue.enquiries@thls.org</a> <a href="http://www.trinityhouse.co.uk">www.trinityhouse.co.uk</a></p>	<p>Records include details of dispersal, position, buoyage, possible cargo and names of wrecks in home (records pre-1940 destroyed by fire).</p>
<p><b>Department of Transport</b> Shipping Policy Division 4/17 Greatminster House 76 Marsham Street London SW1P 4DR T: +44 (0)20 7890 3740</p>	<p>Ownership of hull and cargo of Allied Merchant Ships lost by war causes during both world wars.</p>
<p><b>The Imperial War Museum</b> Lambeth Road London SE1 6HZ T +44 (0)20 7416 5320 F +44 (0)20 7416 5374 E <a href="mailto:mail@iwm.org.uk">mail@iwm.org.uk</a> <a href="http://www.iwm.org.uk/">http://www.iwm.org.uk/</a></p>	<p>A named index of ships covering both world wars.</p>
<p><b>National Maritime Museum</b> Greenwich London SE10 9NF T +44 (0)20 8312 6565 F +44 (0)20 8312 6632 E <a href="mailto:comments@nmm.ac.uk">comments@nmm.ac.uk</a> <a href="http://www.nmm.ac.uk">www.nmm.ac.uk</a></p>	<p>An index as above, plus general maritime history including some wrecks.</p>
<p><b>Centre Européen de Recherches et d'Etudes Sous-marine (Underwater Research Centre)</b> E <a href="mailto:info@ceresm.com">info@ceresm.com</a> <a href="http://www.ceresm.com">www.ceresm.com</a></p>	<p>Information on the search and recovery of shipwrecks including an index of named shipwrecks with histories in French.</p>

Entering “shipwrecks” into an Internet search engine offers up a multitude of sites giving details of shipwrecks sites, ships, artefacts and diving opportunities worldwide.

## Suggested reading

Keith Huntress *A checklist of narratives of shipwrecks and disasters at sea to 1860* (Ames: Iowa State University Press, 1979).

J. G. Lockhart *Peril of the Sea: A Book of Shipwrecks and Escapes* (London: Philip Allan & Co., 1924)

Frank H. Shaw *Famous Shipwrecks* (London: Elkin Mathews, 1930)

Bernard Edwards *The Grey Widow-Maker: The true stories of twenty-four disasters at sea* (London: Futura Publications, 1995)

Charles Hocking *Dictionary of Disasters at Sea during the age of steam 1824 to 1962* (London: Lloyd’s Register, 1969)

Norman Hooke *Modern Shipping Disasters 1963-1987* (London: Lloyd’s of London Press, 1989)

P. Marsden *English Heritage book of ships and shipwrecks* (London: English Heritage, 1997)

Richard and Bridget Larn *Shipwreck Index of the British Isles* (Lloyd’s Register and, latterly, Lloyd’s Register-Fairplay)

- *Volume 1: The South West*
- *Volume 2: The South Coast*
- *Volume 3: The East Coast*
- *Volume 4: Scotland*
- *Volume 5: The West Coast & Wales*
- *Volume 6: Ireland*

I. G. Whittaker *Off Scotland* (1998)

Charles Bateson and Jack Loney *Australian Shipwrecks 1622-1990* (5 vols., various publishers, 1972-91)  
Hugh Edwards *Australian and New Zealand Shipwrecks & Sea Tragedies* (New South Wales: Phillip Mathews, 1978)

C W N Ingram and P O Wheatley *New Zealand Shipwrecks 1795-1960* (3rd ed., Wellington: A. H. and A. W. Reed, 1961)

Bruce D Berman *Encyclopaedia of American shipwrecks* (Boston: Marines Press, 1972)

R F Kennedy *Shipwrecks on and off the coast of Southern Africa: a catalogue and index* (Johannesburg: Johannesburg Public Library, 1955)

Lloyd’s of London *Lloyd’s War Losses – The First World War: Casualties to Shipping through Enemy Causes 1914-18* (Lloyd’s of London Press Ltd., London: 1990)

Lloyd’s of London *Lloyd’s War Losses – The Second World War: British, Allied and Neutral Merchant Vessels Sunk or Destroyed by War Causes* (Lloyd’s of London Press Ltd., London: 1990)

HM Government *British Vessels Lost at Sea 1914-18* (London: HMSO, 1977)

HM Government *British Vessels Lost at Sea 1939-45* (London: HMSO, 1977)

A. J. Tennent *British Merchant Ships sunk by U-Boats in the 1914-1918 War* (Kent: A. J. Tennent, 1990)

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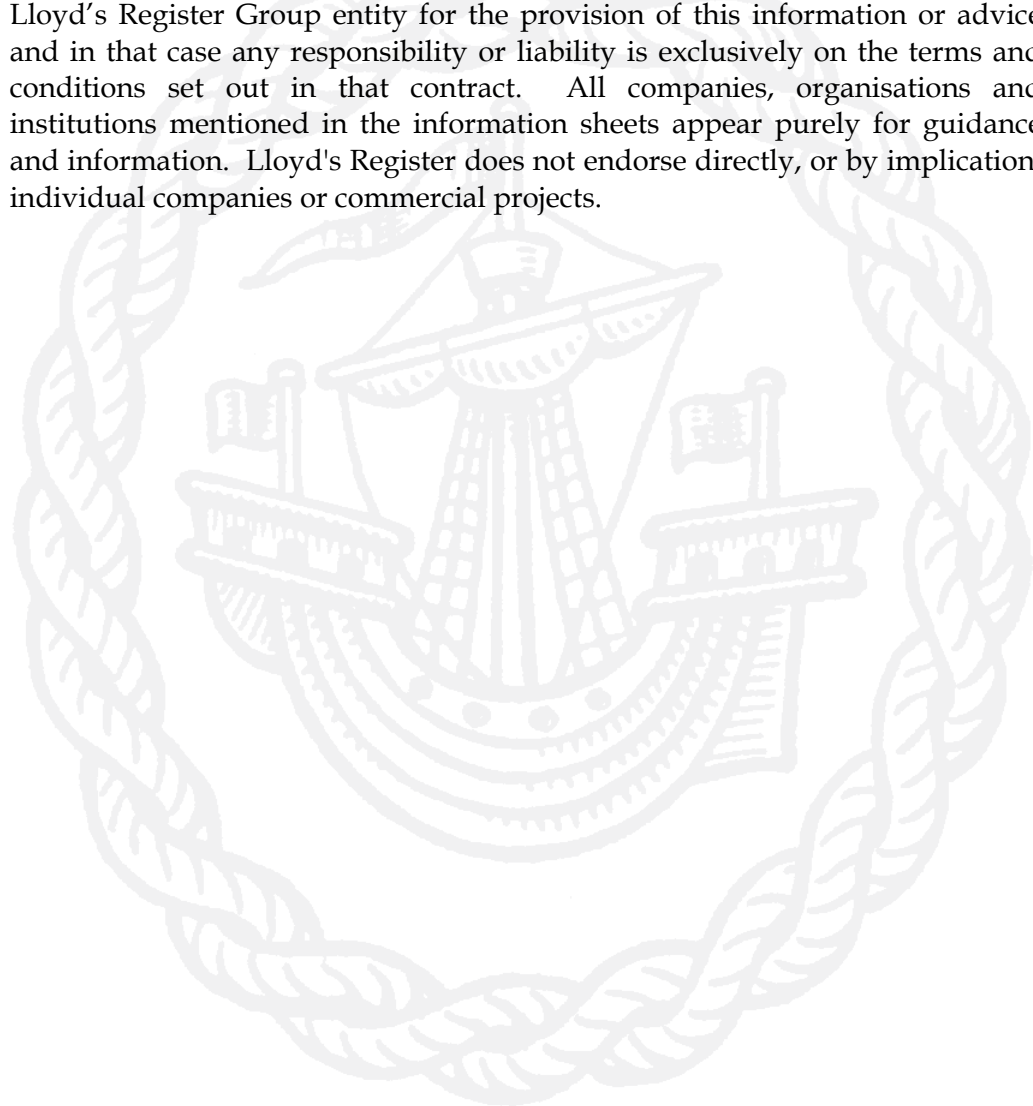
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William O. S. Gilly *Narratives of Shipwrecks of the Royal Navy*  
(London: John W. Parker, 1850)

*To Sail No More*  
A five part series published by  
Maritime Books, Cornwall,  
detailing Royal Navy ships scuttled  
and broken up.

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

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