



SOURCE GUIDE

Hull’s Docks and Trade

During the late 12th century when the monks of Meaux needed a port to export wool from their estates they chose a spot at the junction of the rivers Hull and Humber to build a quay and named it Wyke on Hull. In the late 13th century when Edward I looked for a port in the north east of England he acquired Hull which then became known as Kingston (King’s Town) upon Hull. The king set about enlarging Hull and built an exchange where merchants could buy and sell goods.

Hull’s trade continued to develop as the power structures in Europe altered and by the late 17th century trade was booming, which in itself caused problems as River Hull was unable to cope with the volume of traffic and there were problems with it silting up. This eventually resulted in the development of new docks in the 18th century. This saw Hull prosper through the export of goods from the manufacturing towns of Yorkshire.

From its medieval beginnings, Hull’s main trading links have been with Scotland and northern Europe. Scandinavia, the Baltic and the Low Countries were all key trading areas for Hull’s merchants. In addition, there was some trade with France, Spain and Portugal as well. As sail power gave way to steam, so Hull’s trading links extended throughout the world. Docks like Alexandra Dock were specifically opened to serve the frozen meat trade of Australia, New Zealand and South America. It must also be remembered that Hull was also the centre a thriving inland and coastal trading network, serving the whole of the United Kingdom.

Should you wish to view any of the records held at the History Centre please check the *Visit Us* section of our website at <http://www.hullhistorycentre.org.uk/>

One of the first places to start any research is to consult the History Centre online catalogue which can be found at <http://www.hullhistorycentre.org.uk/catalogue> In addition, at the centre are a number of card catalogue and card indexes which can supplement any search, but cannot be accessed remotely.

Hull’s Docks

- **C DPD** contains the records of The Hull Dock Company which was formed in 1774. Created by the Hull Dock Act it was the first statutory Dock Company in Britain. **C DPD/12** in particular features historical records relating to the Dock Company. Commercial records including registers of ships entering Alexandra Dock, 1885-1910 and 1924-1982 and St. Andrews Dock, 1946-1975 is in **C DPD/8** whilst **C DMX/296** also relates to the Hull Dock Company and contains receipts and disbursements from the published accounts of the Company. Until the 1850s it lists shareholders, as well as the dividend paid 1786-1866.

- **Water Bailiff’s Records**

The Water Bailiffs were officers appointed by the Corporation to collect various dues on shipping owed to it as the owner of the port. The dues were levied on ships using the port and on certain goods imported to and exported from it. The accounts throw light on the trade and shipping of Hull for a period of three centuries but are most valuable for the two periods, 1770-1820 and 1840-1874 when they are nearly complete. Under the reference number **C WB**, they include Accounts, 1592-1602, 1607-8, 1693-1874 (broken series); out port accounts for Gainsborough, Keadby, Selby and Goole for various dates, 1849-70; Bills of entry, 1860-62 (gaps); correspondence 19th century.

- **The Bills of Entry**

These weekly bills published every Saturday are particularly interesting. They include a list of ships leaving foreign ports with quantities and ownerships of cargoes, and a list of ships outwards giving destination ports of ships leaving Hull. There are some available within **C WB** 1851-1857 and 1862 (with one for 1850, and gaps in the years of 1852 and 1856) but a more complete series of Bills of Entry are held at **L.387**. (1835-1853, 1858-1898, 1933-1939 and 1959-1971).

- **The Humber Conservancy**

C DPD/1 contains records from the Humber Conservancy includes records such as the Pilotage and convoy records relating to the port of Grimsby 1914-1916 and Registration dues on craft of various types for Hull, Goole Grimsby, Immingham & the smaller ports (Keadby, etc) 1908-1966. Other minute books and a volume of paper cuttings can be found at **C DIMA**, 1852-1882. The Conservancy and Ministry of War Transport records, 1943-1968 are in **U DX/226**. **U DCC** features the records involving the legal action between the Conservancy and the Constable family, 1869-1880, whilst other records for the Humber Conservancy can be found within **U DEW**, the Ellerman Wilson Line records, 1933-1974 and at **U DTR**, Hull Trinity House records, 1905-1906.

Organisations involved in Hull’s Trade

Records of the Hull and Humber Chamber of Commerce are held at **C DSCC** and, they include records of constituent groups, for example:

- **C DSCC/3** Hull Ship and Rigging Contractors Associations 1977-1981
- **C DSCC/8** Shipping Committee 1875-1979
- **C DSCC/13** Hull District Maritime Board 1918-1949
- **C DSCC/27** The Hull Association of Port Labour Employers 1916-1989
- **C DSCC/52** Shipping Federation 1917-1939
- **C DSCC/58** Hull Association of Port Lighterage Interests 1975-1982
- **C DSCC/64** Keel and Lighter Owners Association 1894-1982
- **C DSCC/65** Lighter Owners and River Crafts Committee 1905-1976
- **C DSCC/66** Hull Lighterage Company 1945 – 1974

- **L.380.6** The minutes of the Hull Incorporated Chamber of Commerce and Shipping, 1889-1994
- **L. 380.6** *The Helm* and *The Gateway*, the journals of the Hull Junior Chamber of Commerce 1964-1974
- **L. 380.6** *Humber Industry*, a journal produced by the Chambers of Commerce from both sides of the Humber 1957-1964

Further sources

- **C DXQ/121** Records for the opening of the Joint (George) Dock 1914
- **C DXX/34** Plans of the River Humber and Pamphlets regarding the docks below Hull 1832- 1886
- **C TGH** Hull Harbourmasters, including river traffic journals. 1950 - 1990
- **C WHG** Records of the Hull and Goole Port Sanitary Authority 1873-1979
- **L.352.4** Minutes, annual reports and schedules for the Hull and Goole Port Sanitary Authority 1892-2001
- **C BRB** The meetings of the Bench of Alderman that ran the pre-1836 Corporation of Hull were recorded in their Bench Books. These will contain much information on the development of the port of Hull. Bench Book 2, (**C BRB/4**) contains a list of ships coming through Hull for the years 1577-1585. A transcription by Helen Good (2005) is available at **C SRL/T**.
- **C TCM** The council minutes include many aspects of the town’s and city’s links with the docks.
- **C DMM** Papers and documents from various organisations, societies, firms and institutions including the Hull Guardian Society for the Protection of Trade and material relating to Hull Docks *Various dates*
- **C DPN** Hull Office of the National Dock Labour Board 1941-1989
- **C BRE/3** Register of canal boats plying between Hull and other places on the inland navigation system, 1795.
- **U DHS** Timber firm, Horsley Smith & Co. who were involved in the acquisition of timber for the ship building industry 1871-1968
- **U DTG** Records of the Transport and General Workers Union 1951-1990
- **U DTE** Records of the timber merchants, Tealby. 1800-1960
- **U DTO** Papers of Tony Topham Trade unionist in the docks industry. 1881-1985
- **U DMN** The papers of Charles (later Lord) Ammon, a politician heavily involved with Britain’s docks trade. 1886-1971

Within the **C DMX** collection there are several records relating to Hull Docks, shipping and trade. For example:

- **C DMX/10** Docks Acts and a proposed canal 1804
- **C DMX/17** Plans of docks, reports and accounts 1830-1905
- **C DMX/ 20** Receipt and business cards 1836-42
- **C DMX/48** Evidence of arbitration relating to Immingham docks 1911
- **C DMX/52** Pamphlets posters and notices issued by merchants, ship owners and others interested in docks and trade in the Port of Hull 1793-4
- **C DMX/74** Maister and Rennard’s Bills of Entry, shareholders and other dock papers 1775-1807
- **C DMX/101** Pamphlets relating to dock controversies 1786-1835
- **C DMX/150** Records relating to the towns’ docks 1766-1787

Local newspapers give contemporary accounts on the building of the docks and the various changes which have taken place over the years. Maps, available in the public library area and amongst the archival collections will also provide valuable evidence as to when the docks were developed.

The **U DTE**, **U DTG** and **U DTO** collections may contain material that has access conditions. Please contact the History Centre for more details.

Book Collection

The History Centre holds many books on Hull’s dock and trade. These include:

- Volumes produced by Hull and Humber Ports, 1904-1970s. (**L. 380.6**)
 - Port of Hull Annual,*
 - The Trade of the Hull and Humber Ports*
 - Humber Ports Monthly*
 - Port of Hull Journal*
 - Hull Trade and Transit*
 - Intalink* (which includes the Port of Hull Journal).
- Printed books and other related material including Year Books, reports, guides, pamphlets and booklets relating to the docks and Hulls’ trade (**L. 380.6**)

Records’ held elsewhere

Hull’s Maritime Museum

Hull Maritime Museum, Queen Victoria Square, HU1 3DX

Telephone: 01482 300300

Email: museums@hullcc.gov.uk

Website: <http://www.hullcc.gov.uk>

Hull Maritime Museum holds some material relating to fishing companies in Hull and an extensive range of ship models and art work. A fully searchable database is available at <http://www.hullcc.gov.uk/museumcollections> this includes information, but not necessarily an image of each item, from the Maritime Museum’s extensive art and photographic collections.

The National Archives

The National Archives, Kew, Richmond, Surrey, TW9 4DU.

Telephone: 020 8392 5200

Email: enquiry@nationalarchives.gov.uk

Website: <http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/about>

The National Archives holds records of pre-nationalisation railway companies, pre-nationalisation canal and related companies, **RAIL**, some of which include records relating to Hull Docks. Details can be found at <http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk>

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