

HOW THE INFORMATION IS ARRANGED.

The official register had commenced in 1786 and sailing vessels with a deck and over 15 tons had to be registered by law while all, however small, had to be registered if it was intended to sail them to a foreign port. "Registry cancelled," could indicate that the vessel had been broken up but may it in fact have been relegated to some other use, e.g. as a houseboat or harbour lighter or sold to another port. In some instances a registry was never cancelled, perhaps because the owner/master was lost with the vessel and there was nobody to inform the authorities, or for similar reasons.

The details of each craft are, where known and applicable, as follows:-

Registry year /number. Vessel's name in ***Bold Italic*** type.

Fisheries identification number, introduced March 1869 by the Sea Fisheries Act of 1868 as a result of a treaty with France. Allocated to new and existing vessels, it was obligatory to display them.

Tonnage: t or tOM=tons old measurement (before 1836), tNM=tons new measurement (between 1836 and 1855), grt= gross registered tonnage after 1855, and/or net registered tonnage (net) in brackets.

Material, e.g. iron, wood or steel; composite = wooden planks on iron or steel frames. Sailing vessels are assumed to be wood and steamers steel unless stated otherwise.

Brief description of vessel. N.B. The term 'smack' was cutter rigged in the modern sense of the term, and some 'smacks' were used more for trading than for fishing, 'cutter' indicating a longer bowsprit and often with square topsails. 'Yacht' is used to mean a privately owned pleasure craft, and may be used to cover anything from a small dinghy to a steel steamer. The term 'yaw'l' referred to a shallow hull type in the early 1800's and these seem to have been one or two masted sprit- or lugsail rigged craft often used as beach boats. In the second half of that century the word acquired its present meaning of a two masted rig with the small mizzen aft of the tiller; a type previously referred to as a 'dandy'. The term 'yaw'l' seems to have first come into use in place of 'dandy' as early as 1835, but 'dandy' was also still in use in the 1880's.

Dimensions are; registered length x breadth x depth. The dimensions are in feet and inches 32'10" or in feet and tenths of feet 43.5'; the former is associated with 'old measurement' (i.e. before 1836). Note that there are differences in these measurements and a change, e.g. from Old to New measurement, may result in other dimensions being recorded with no alterations to the vessel itself.

Engine builders and the type of engine, C=compound, T=triple expansion for steam engines, cyl=cylinder(s) and ihp=indicated horse power (steam).

Completion date and place of build. e.g. C.6/1854 at Ipswich. Also name of builder, in **bold**, and name of the owner for whom the vessel was built, place of business or residence when given.

Official number on the British Register e.g. (ON 123456). Introduced on 1st May 1855 by the Merchant Shipping Act of 1854, blocks of numbers were allocated to the various ports of registry, and a number was given to all new ships and retrospectively to existing vessels.

Previous registry as 'ex CK.1825/123' and subsequent registry as '=>MN.1856/12' when applicable.

New owners, date of change, their trade or profession (in brackets) place of business or residence, and port of registry; e.g. 11/1825 Sold to Thomas Skipper, Thorpe, Harwich. N.B. after 1824 ownership had by law to be by 64th shares, but it seems superfluous so say here that a sole owner had 64/64s of a vessel! Also after 1855 the port of registry no longer had to be near the principal owner's place of business even if that was another port; the place of residence or business in these cases is indicated by the expression e.g. 'of London, Colchester' meaning the owner lived in London but vessel registered at Colchester.. Not included are the mortgages, a sphere of study in themselves, nor the occupations of most of the recent owners of yachts.

Fate or next registry.

I have divided each of the register transcripts into four parts:

1. 1786 to 1823 when the rules of ownership were changed and all vessels had to be re-registered, but not at once.
2. 1824 to 1835 when the new Measurement tonnage rules came into force.
3. 1836 to 1855 when the terms of the Merchant Shipping Act of 1854 came into force; official numbers and register tonnage; later gross and net.
4. 1855 to 1990 when the registers were centralised at Cardiff.

Note that many of these are missing either because the registers have been lost or destroyed or because they have not yet been released to the public.

The names, titles and values of people, places, countries, Weights, measures, currencies, etc, and the spellings are those (errors excepted) in use in Britain at the relevant time.

Port Name Abbreviations.

Although these port letters are for FISHING vessels of all sizes from deep water trawlers down to open boats, I have used the same as abbreviations for the ports mentioned in my list. The port letters and number system dates from the Sea Fisheries Act of 1868 which, as a result of a treaty with France, came into effect in 1869 when numbers were given to every vessel fishing commercially. Here is a list, complete as far as I can tell, of all ports of registry in the old UK. Those with no letters against them had probably closed before 1869. As can be seen, I have included those which are now in the Irish Republic. The letters were allocated to each port of registry in the UK and most were the first or the first and last letters of the port's name, but to avoid duplications a certain amount of ingenuity had to be used in a few instances. Since 1869 there have been some additions and deletions to the list. For those ports where registers had closed before 1869 I have sometimes used my own abbreviations, e.g. S.wold for Southwold.

Aberdeen	A	S	Aberystwyth	AB	W
Aldeborough		E	Alloa	AA	S
Arundel		E	Arbroath	AH	S
Ardrossan	AD	S	Ayr	AR	S
Ballantrae	BA	S	Ballina	BA	IR
Banff	BF	S	Barnstaple	BE	E
Barrow	BW	E	Beaumaris	BS	W
Belfast	B	NI	Berwick	BK	E
Bideford	BD	E	Blyth	BH	S
Bo'ness	BO	S	Boston	BN	E
Bridgewater	BR	E	Bridlington		E
Bridport		E	Bristol	BL	E
Brixham	BM	E	Broadford	BRD	S
Buckie	BCK	S	Burtonisland	BU	S
Caernarvon	CO	W	Campbeltown	CN	S
Cardiff	CF	W	Cardigan	CA	W
Carlisle	CL	E	Carmarthen		W
Castle Bay, Barra	CY	S	Castletown	CT	IOM
Chepstow		W	Chester	CH	E
Chichester		E	Cley		E
Colchester	CK	E	Coleraine	CE	NI
Cork	C	IR	Cowes	CS	E
Dartmouth	DH	E	Deal	DL	E
Derbyhaven		IOM	Douglas	DO	IOM
Dover	DR	E	Drogheda	DA	IR
Dublin	D	IR	Dumfries	DS	S

Dundalk	DK	IR	Dundee	DE	S
Exeter	E	E	Falmouth	FH	E
Faversham	F / FM	E	Fleetwood	FD	E
Folkstone	FE	E	Fowey	FY	E
Fraserburgh	FR	S	Gainsborough		E
Galway	G	IR	Glasgow	GW	S
Grangmouth	GH	S	Gloucester	GR	E
Goole	GE	E	Granton	GN	S
Greenock	GK	S	Grimsby	GY	E
Guernsey	GU	CI	Gweek		E
Hayle	HE	E	Hartlepool	HL	E
Harwich	HH	E	Hull	H	E
Ilfracombe		E	Inverness	INS	S
Ipswich	IH	E	Irvine	IE	S
Jersey	J	CI	Kirkcaldy	KY	S
Kirkwall	K	S	Lancaster	LR	E
Leith	LH	S	Lerwick	LK	S
Littlehampton	LI	E	Liverpool	LL	E
Llanelly	LA	W	London	LO	E
Londonderry	LY	NI	Lowestoft	LT	E
Lyme	LE	E	Limerick	L	IR
Lynn	LN	E	Maldon	MN	E
Manchester	MR	E	Maryport	MT	E
Methil	ML	S	Middlesborough	MH	E
Milford	M	W	Montrose	ME	S
Newport, Mon.(Gwent)	NT	W	Newry	N	NI
Newhaven	NN	E	Newcastle	NE	E
New Ross / Ross	NS	IR	Oban	OB	S
Padstow	PW	E	Peel	PL	IOM
Penzance	PZ	E	Perth	PEH	S
Peterhead	PD	S	Plymouth	PH	E
Poole	PE	E	Portsmouth	P	E
Port Glasgow	PGW	S	Port Talbot	PT	W
Preston	PN	E	Ramsey		IOM
Ramsgate	R	E	Rochester	RR	E
Rothsay	RO	S	Runcorn	RN	E
Rye	RX	E	Sandwich		E
Scarborough	SH	E	Scilly	SC	E
St Ives	SS	E			
St Margaret's Hope	SMH	S	Salcombe	SE	E
Scilly	SC	E	Shields		E
Shields, North	SN	E	Shields, South	SSS	E
Shoreham	SM	E	Skibbereen	S	IR
Sligo	SO	IR	Southampton	SU	E
Southwold		E	Sunderland	SD	E
Stockton	ST	E	Stornoway	SY	S
Stranraer	SR	S	Swansea	SA	W
Tarbert	TT	S	Teignmouth	TH	E
Tralee	T	IR	Troon	TN	S
Truro	TO	E	Ullapool	UL	S
Waterford	W	IR	Wells	WS	E
Westport	WT	IR	Weymouth	WH	E
Wexford	WD	IR	Whitehaven	WA	E
Whitby	WY	E	Wick	WK	S
Wigtown	WN	S	Wisbech	WI	E

Workington	WO	E	Woodbridge	WE	E
Yarmouth	YH	E	Youghal		IR

PS, Note that if the dimensions, the occupations of the owners (other than the master), completion dates day and month, or the exact tonnage with fractions are given that information has come from the Custom House Registers. Information about repairs, etc., anchor chains, and of course, Lloyd's classification, is from Lloyd's Registers.