



FISHING FOR YOUR ANCESTORS

THE MERCHANT AND NAVAL SERVICES IN THE FIRST WORLD WAR

DR CHRIS WARE, UNIVERSITY OF GREENWICH

Sources for tracing your ancestors in World War One can be found in government generated archives. On this sheet are some of the resources which you can use to start your research.

THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES, KEW

The National Archives (TNA) website has an online catalogue and other online resources to help with your research:
<http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/>

MERCHANT SERVICE

Merchant seamen's campaign medal records 1914-1918:

Record class: BT 351/1/1, BT 351/1/2 and MT 9/1404. Consisting of 155,000 record cards of those who received Mercantile Marine Medal and the War Medal.

Royal Naval Reserve 1914-1918:

Record class BT 164 and BT 377, approximately 148,000 records survive mostly for the period of the First World War.

Crew lists and agreements:

As these are not indexed by person you will need the ships' name and official number. The official number can be found in the Mercantile Navy list, copies at TNA and the Maritime Museum.

THE ROYAL NAVY

Royal Navy ratings' service records

Record class: ADM 188 register of seamen's services which run from 1873 to 1923.

Royal Naval Division service records 1914-1919: ADM 339, contains serving records of those who fought in the RND 1914-1919.

Royal Navy officers' service records 1756-1931

Record class: ADM 196, include records for commissioned officers joining the Navy up to 1917 and the records of Royal Marines officers up to 1925.

Royal Naval Volunteer Reserve service records 1903-1922

Record class: ADM 337, records of both ratings and officers in the Volunteer Reserve

GATEWAYS TO THE FIRST WORLD WAR OPEN DAY
NATIONAL MARITIME MUSEUM, GREENWICH
28 SEPTEMBER 2014



Women's Royal Naval service records 1917-1919

Record class ADM 318 for officers and ADM 336 for ratings, records of 5,000 women who served in the WRNS.

THE NATIONAL MARITIME MUSEUM, GREENWICH

<http://collections.rmg.co.uk/>

Master and Mates in the Merchant service

You will need the number of the person's certificate to find whether the Museum has a copy of this.

Crew lists and agreement

The National Maritime Museum holds these for voyages with years ending in 5, i.e. 1915; this is a ten yearly sample. You will need the ship's name and official number, which can be gained from the Mercantile Navy List.

The Museum's Caird Library

The Library holds, amongst many other things, Navy lists for Officers of the Royal Navy and the NRN and RNVR for the First World War. It also holds copies of the Mercantile Navy List, as well as Lloyds register, and other classification societies which provide detail of merchant vessels. It holds the Official History of the War at Sea and a large number of books on the First World War at sea which might be helpful in your research. It also has a copy of the register of the Masters and Mates certificates from the Guild hall Library.

MARITIME HISTORY RESEARCH COLLECTION **MEMORIAL UNIVERSITY OF NEWFOUNDLAND, CANADA**

<http://www.mun.ca/mha/>

Under the very complex way that crew lists and agreements were preserved, the bulk of the crew lists and agreements are now in Canada. The Maritime History Archive will carry out a search for you, for a fee, and provide copies of documents.

THE GUILDHALL LIBRARY IN THE CITY OF LONDON

<http://www.cityoflondon.gov.uk/things-to-do/visiting-the-city/archives-and-city-history/guildhall-library/Pages/default.aspx>

The Guildhall Library has a maritime collection which includes registers of masters and mates in the merchant service, as well as shipping movements and shipping casualties.

Gateways to the First World War is an AHRC-funded centre for public engagement with the First World War centenary. The centre is managed by the University of Kent in partnership with the Universities of Brighton, Greenwich, Portsmouth, Leeds and Queen Mary University of London. For further advice on researching the First World War or developing a centenary project visit **www.gatewaysfww.org.uk** or email **gateways@kent.ac.uk**.