

Explanatory Notes to accompany the British Southern Whale Fishery Voyage and Crew List databases – Version August 2018

The BSW Voyage database of around 2,550 voyages draws extensively on data contained in Volumes 1 to 3 of *Ships Employed in the South Seas Trade* by A. G. E. Jones, indexed by Ian Nicholson and typed and prepared for publication by Mr. Jones sister, Gwyneth Jones.

Thanks are also due to Jane Clayton who compiled her own list of pre-1815 voyages to aid her own research and contributed information to 315 entries.

Grateful thanks also to Graeme Broxam (Hobart, Tasmania) of the Roebuck Society and Navarine Press for permission to re-purpose the original data.

The Crew List database of over 15,240 entries was created by Dale Chatwin.

Citation for databases

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An earlier version of the data developed by John Nicholls (currently at Trinity College, Dublin) was previously hosted at the University of Hull.

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Adrian Tschoegl, Philadelphia, who has been working through our data and creating in-depth profiles on Wikipedia which often detail previous lives of BSWF vessels.

General Information about the Voyage and Crew Databases

Departure and return dates used are those most closely reflecting the actual sailing or arrival date rather than 'Report' dates as recorded in Lloyds List or the Bills of Entry for the landing or reporting of the cargo. This usually results in a variation of only a few days. Nearly all 'Reports' are from Lloyds List or Logs. For entries in the 1850s the Shipping and Mercantile Gazette has been used to supplement Lloyds List.

Where vessels relocated from London to Sydney or Hobart – a regular occurrence from the 1830s – the last London originating voyage is listed with a note that the vessel was now based out of the Colonies. Trying to include the colonial voyages proved quite problematic and is better dealt with in a separate Colonial whaling voyages database. An example is the *Betsy* of Leith which sailed as a transport to the colonies then undertook two whaling voyages from Sydney, returning to London and then departing on another voyage from London.

A Departure Year field has been added to enable some idea of total departures in a single year to be determined.

Turn backs / returns to port have not been noted on departure unless the event was significant *i.e.* over a month delay. This is recorded in the Voyage Notes.

There are likely to be some vessels which though they had the pattern and appearance of having taken a whaling voyage were traders *i.e.* the *Prince Regent* which sailed twice to the Sandwich Islands. A matter which requires further investigation are the occasional increases in the number of voyages. Was this due to expanded grounds, cessation of hostilities, availability of capital and ships, or; were these not whaling or sealing voyages at all. It becomes especially complicated as voyages to Valparaiso and the coast of Peru could also have been for other reasons (a source of slaves).

In many instances the process of developing and inputting voyages into the database has revealed obvious gaps, unknown voyages or double voyages (*i.e.* where a cargo was transhipped and the vessel returned to whaling). Having a combination of resources to draw upon (*i.e.* Lloyds, the Bills of Entry, SADs for Australian and Pacific ports, and newspapers) has revealed many instances where the first or last voyage by a vessel was missed in Jones scan of Lloyds List and other sources like the Bills of Entry. Similarly, unknown voyages in the centre of a number of voyages (*i.e.* the *Foxhound*) have been revealed and have been able to be described. Often, a change of owner or master, is associated with these voyages being lost.

One must also note that owners, particularly the Enderby's and the Bennett's liked to perpetuate the same name across a number of vessels *i.e.* the Bennett vessels named *Recovery* which both had long lives in the trade and the various *Rochester's* owned by A & J Hill in the 1820s and 1830s.

Masters as listed in crew lists (BT1/25 or BT98) or early sailing records were sometimes replaced prior to departure *i.e.* one master took the vessel down the River and then another took the vessel to the south seas. Similarly, mishaps and deaths on route could often result in a change of leadership. Known deaths where one master has replaced another are marked with a "/" in the Masters Field in the Voyage database. You can Search for all know deaths on board by typing "/" into the Masters Field. Misspellings and miss-communication impacts the quality of Masters data in the Voyage database. Names in the Crew List database are of much higher quality and can be better relied upon.

Because crew lists and logs often included details of the previous vessel on which a whaleman sailed we have been able to “derive” over 1500 additional crew entries by taking the whaleman at his word. The validity of this approach has been shown in each circumstance where we have been able to verify a whaleman’s presence on a previous voyage.

A single aggregated cargo field has been created for each voyage where a cargo is known. Prior to the mid-1790s and post 1820 cargo data is quite authoritative. Post 1816 when the ‘Bills of Entry’ were published a cargo could be reported as “landed” by the vessel and as “measured” by the Gauger. Where possible both measures have been listed. Tanks often featured on English vessels after the Napoleonic wars and were purpose built into the frame of the vessel and made of iron. It appears they were not removed on landing as there are incidences of successive voyages referring to the same number of tanks of oil.

[Incomplete] – rather than report no cargo landed at London at all where progress reports were available during the voyage the latest / largest figure has been listed. This at least provides some indication of the nature of the cargo probably landed in London.

Measuring Oil

It is important to remember that whale oil in the English trade was measured by volume NOT weight though many dealers in the London trade preferred to sell a gallon of oil as 7 1/2 lbs. Scoresby notes that this effectively benefited the dealer around 3 ounces per gallon.

Prior to 1824 in the UK the volume of oil used “English Units” which were standardised with the Queen Anne standard established in 1707. Originally the measure was eight barrels, each of 35 gallons (equal to 42 wine gallons) comprising one tun of oil (*i.e.* 280 oil gallons OR 336 wine gallons) but post 1707 and introduction of the Queen Anne standard the measure for a barrel shifted to 31.5 gallons or 252 gallons per tun.

Post 1824, with the introduction of the Imperial System a UK ton (tun was no longer used) was standardised to comprise 210 gallons though it appears that the trade continued to prefer its own measure. This may explain why we later find a Cask often equated to one ton of oil – calculating landed cargoes in barrels and tuns against casks as measured by the Gaugers nearly always approximates between six and six ½ barrels to a cask.

Wine, Spirits, Cider, Vinegar, Oil and Honey measurements

Measure	Equivalent
18 gallons	1 rundlet
31½ gallons	1 barrel
42 gallons	1 tierce
2 barrels (63 gallons)	1 hogshead
2 tierces (84 gallons)	1 puncheon
2 hogsheads or 3 tierces (126 gallons)	1 pipe or butt
2 pipes or 3 puncheons (252 gallons)	1 tun

Measurements after 1824

Measure	Equivalent
15 Imperial gallons	1 rundlet
26¼ Imperial gallons	1 barrel
35 Imperial gallons	1 tierce
3½ rundlets or 2 barrels (52½ gallons)	1 hogshead
2 tierces (70 gallons)	1 puncheon
2 hogsheads or 3 tierces (105 gallons)	1 pipe or butt
2 pipes (210 gallons)	1 tun

Source: University of Nottingham -

<http://www.nottingham.ac.uk/manuscriptsandspecialcollections/researchguidance/weightsandmeasures/volumes.aspx>

Key to Database Fields:

There are two databases.

The Voyage database of around 2550 records contains extensive data on each voyage. The Field mapping has been generally designed to support comparison with work undertaken by the World Whaling History Project.

A Crew List database records entries for over 15,200 men sailings on BSWF vessels – mostly collected from crew lists and other Official Sources. In this dataset around 1,000 entries have been generated from Official Sources where the seaman has indicated they previously served on this vessel. In general this information has proved correct though the value in determining role is less reliable.

The databases are linked by a VoyageID number which is a combination of a Unique Ship Number and a Voyage Number e.g. 926.0 is the first voyage of the *William Nicol* in 1843 – 926.1 is the second voyage in 1847 and 926.2 is the third voyage in 1851. A look in the Crew List database will find lots of entries for Voyages 926.1 and 926.2.

Voyage Database Fields – note that not ALL Fields are displayed in the Date Viewer – you may need to SHOW them

VoyageID - a Unique Ship number and a voyage number e.g. BV0926.0 is the first voyage of the William Nicol in 1843 – BV0926.1 is the second voyage in 1847 and BV0926.2 is the third voyage in 1851. A look in the Crew List database will find lots of crew entries for voyages BV0926.1 and BV0926.2

VoyageName – the name of the ship and the year it departed – standardised to reflect the most common form of the name *i.e.* *Diana / Diane* was often misspelt / confused. Different vessels with the same name can be differentiated using the Voyage. The year the vessel sailed has been

appended according to best information – this enables a Search to be conducted which will provide all departed voyages in a particular year.

Port – the vessels home port – London was by far the largest home port [around 95% of voyages] and where not known London has been assigned

Dock – essentially a record of the docks used in London. Surprisingly the Greenland Dock, a dock specifically for whaleships, does not appear to have been favoured [used by the Northern Fishery only?] A list of Docks are in SST1 and SST3 [see below for explanation of acronyms]

East / West - we know that American vessels overwhelmingly preferred to sail via the Horn once the Pacific grounds were established. It is clearly different for the British. Following the initial foray by the *Emilia* into the Pacific via the Horn the British fleet favoured the Horn primarily because of the wealth of whales to be taken around Peru. This focus on the Horn route continued during the Napoleonic Wars but during the first decade of the 1800s period exploitation of the western Pacific and Indian Oceans commenced with the British quickly coming to favour and preferring the following routes to the end of the trade in 1859: - Timor / Japans; NSW / New Zealand; or the Indian Ocean / Seychelles. This was encouraged by the removal of the East India Company's rights to specific routes to the sub-continent and China and a preference to use Sydney as a place to reprovision. Of the 2500 voyages in the database we know the preferred direction of sailing for about half of them. An initial focus in the early years of the trade was on the Atlantic (431 known voyages) with probably all pre-1790 voyages restricted to the Atlantic remembering this excludes the northern trade; from around 1790 a strong emphasis on the new Horn route with 390 known voyages in a very concentrated period of about 20 years; and, from about the middle of the first decade in the 1800s voyaging east of the Cape of Good Hope (461 voyages). Guessing which way a vessel went has its issues – for instance when originally compiled the *Henrietta* on its 1837 and 1841 voyages based on ports of call might have been thought to have sailed via the Horn (ie west) but access to the crew lists show instead that the vessel sailed east through Timor straight to the Japans. In fact in its 1841 voyage the vessel left London on 2 September 1841 and was in Copang Harbour on 2 February 1842.

Destination – a stated destination from Lloyds List or the most obvious first whaling ground visited

Grounds – identified whaling grounds frequented by a vessel. Derived from 'Pre-20th Century Sperm Whaling Grounds' CARP/HI/3 developed by John Bannister for the US National Marine Fisheries Service under Contract # 3-15401 expanded to account for right whale grounds and sperm grounds specifically known to be frequented by the British Southern Whaling Fleet (see Appendix A at the end of this document) *i.e.* essentially a disaggregation of the China Sea & East Indies groupings used by Bannister.

Date sailed – the actual date a vessel departed in a year usually from Lloyds List but sometimes even more reliable sources. This is often missing.

Date returned - the actual date a vessel returned to its main port usually from Lloyds List but sometimes even more reliable sources. This is often missing.

Days_Out – a simple count of the number of days at sea where departure and return data are known.

Fate – records whether a vessel was Lost, Taken, Re-located or Condemned

Owner – the owner as identified usually from the Customs Bills of Entry or by the Enderby family [SST3]. Forms of owner name vary and in many instances vessels were owned in partnership with many smaller owners unidentified. As voyage lengths were shorter ownership appears to change hands more frequently in the earlier half of the trade. From the late 1820s two forms of ownership appear, full ownership (i.e. concentration) of vessels in fleets by shipowners like Joseph Some, George Young and the Wigram and Green partnership (perpetuating and extending the Bennett and Mellish full ownership models); and, probably as a consequence of the risk due to lengthening voyages, fractional ownership amongst oil merchants, ship chandlers, agents and shipowners i.e. see the ownership records of the vessel *Samuel Enderby*

Agent - from the Customs Bills of Entry [SST3]. The Agent trade was highly concentrated.

Cargo – aggregated cargo information most often from the Customs Bills of Entry [SST3] or information provided by the Enderby's. If not stated the cargo can be assumed to be sperm whale oil. Includes amounts of *ambergris* where known. A profitable process would be to go back to the Bills of Entry now that return dates are known as there is almost certainly a cargo record recorded for voyages post 1816.

Cargo bounty / Premium – the bounty paid to the most successful whalers prior to the early 1800s

Cargo value – as determined by Enderby in his list of vessels pre-1800

Sperm – recorded if individually specified in the cargo manifest

Whale oil - recorded if individually specified in the cargo manifest

Bone - recorded if individually specified in the cargo manifest

Seal skins – recorded if individually specified in the cargo manifest

Seal oil – recorded if individually specified in the cargo manifest

Elephant oil - recorded if individually specified in the cargo manifest

Crew size – as recorded in an actual crew list [BT1/25] or BT98 or from the Customs Bills of Entry [SST3]

Crew list – links to the Crew List database if content available

Sources – resources consulted to establish where the whaler went and how successful it was [see end of article).

Reports – reports or “speaking” for the vessel as reported in Lloyds List or other sources. In the British Fishery often the only record of a Voyage available

MasterID – links the voyages of Masters who served in both the British and American fisheries. Currently estimated to be somewhere between 50 and 100 men

Master – name of the captain usually from Lloyds List [SST1] or other sources [SST2 or SST3]. All instances from all sources are given separated by a single slash '/' as well as the known name where established. Misspelling were common. Deaths during the voyage or events which have required a change of master have been identified using a double slash i.e. "//". The Master names in the Crew List database are much more accurate

VesselID – links Vessels which served in both the British and American fisheries. Currently estimated to be less than 20 vessels

Ship – the name of the Vessel and variations of the name i.e. Ann or Anne where the Sources record different versions

Rig – from the various Registers of Shipping (quality Fair). The benefit of particular types of rig is disputed but it does appear many ship rigged vessels were converted to barques / barks as they were reportedly easier to manage with a small crew

Tonnage (old) – pre early 1830s tonnages for vessels (quality Fair)

Tonnage (new) - post mid-1830s tonnages for vessels. The variation appears to have been around 5% from Old Tonnage (quality Fair)

Place built - from the various Registers of Shipping

Date built - from the Registers of Shipping

Vessel value – from Enderby's lists from the early 1800s. The value of vessel was recorded at the start of Voyage. Sale values are recorded in Notes were known

Notes – notes of relevance to the voyage. Usually a *precis* of the main events or extracted from a newspaper in the case of loss of the vessel, mutiny etc.

Key to sources for Voyage Database:

SST1 – Ships Employed in the South Seas Trade 1775- 1861 [Volume 1] - used primarily via Lloyds List entries to identify where the whalers went and to report on progress of the voyage

SST2 - Ships Employed in the South Seas Trade 1775- 1859 [Volume 2] – primarily used to identify owners, masters, date of build, rig and tonnage from the various Registers of Shipping

SST3 - Ships Employed in the South Seas Trade 1775- 1859 [Volume 3] – primarily used to identify vessels which went whaling and their cargoes. Contains cargo information from the Customs Bills of Entry

SSWF – Ships Employed in the South Sea Whale Fishery from Britain 1775 – 1815

LOG SHERMAN - Whaling Logbooks and Journals 1613 – 1927

LISLE – Six Voyages by Captain William Lisle (SPRI Whaling pamphlets vol 3 no. 1) – in the collection of the Royal Geographical Society (London)

LOG ?? ?? – with location and call number of the log in specific library collections

CGHGG – Cape of Good Hope Government Gazette

BoI – Bay of Islands Ships Arrivals and Departures

HNL – Honolulu Ships Arrivals and Departures

TAH – Tahiti Ships Arrivals and Departures

WP - Wikipedia

STH – St Helena Arrivals and Departures

MIC – Foreign Ships in Micronesia

NMM – National Maritime Museum (UK)

NLA – National Library of Australia

NHA – Nantucket Historical Association Research Library Log Books

NBWM – New Bedford Whaling Museum

BT1/25 - records of the Board of Trade and of successor and related bodies 01 February 1805 to 30 June 1805

BT98 – crew list records for whaleships to the southern fishery from the Board of Trade 1830s to 1850. A notation on the crew list for the Harriett for 1837 suggests the “64” which appears on some lists *i.e.* 64/6152 may be the code for London.

ATSUU – A Trade So Uncontrollably Uncertain: a study of the British Southern Whale Fishery 1815 to 1860

AJCP – Australian Joint Copying Project – extensive microfilm collection of material relating to the Pacific and whaling

CotG – Cruise of the Gipsey

Corsair – Narrative of the Shipwreck of the Corsair

SG – Sydney Gazette

SH – Sydney Herald

SM – Sydney Monitor

SMG – Shipping and Mercantile Gazette (London)

ELMEC – El Mercurio (Valparaiso)

Campbell – A Voyage Round the World from 1806 to 1812 by Archibald Campbell (1822)

[Stavers Journal](#) – a record of the career of Thomas Reed Stavers with information on many other whaling members of the Stavers family – can be read online

Falklands - <https://falklandstimeline.wordpress.com/>

Most Australian and English newspapers are identified with their full title and date of entry

Crew List Database Fields

VoyageID - a Unique Ship number and a voyage number e.g. BV0926.0 is the first voyage of the William Nicol in 1843 – BV0926.1 is the second voyage in 1847 and BV0926.2 is the third voyage in 1851. A look in the Crew List database will find lots of crew entries for voyages BV0926.1 and BV0926.2

Voyage – the name of the ship and the year it departed – standardised to reflect the most common form of the name *i.e.* *Diana / Diane* was often misspelt / confused. Different vessels with the same

name can be differentiated using the Voyage. The year the vessel sailed has been appended according to best information – this enables a Search to be conducted which will provide all departed voyages in a particular year.

First Name – first and sometimes middle name of the crew member – single named persons i.e. Bobby (where known) are listed in the Last Name Field

Last Name – surname of the crew member. Where crew members have a single name (usually islanders) e.g. 'Bobby' – it is listed as a surname.

Age – the age of the crew man where recorded or it can be estimated

Born - where born or sometimes ethnicity – sometimes the place of residence is stated

Role – the crew members position on the vessel. Multiple masters names are recorded separately where listed. Passengers are listed where known.

Last served – last vessel served on where known

Notes – general information pertaining to the life of the crewmen including death/ injury if occurred on the voyage

Source – resources consulted to establish who sailed on the vessel including crew lists, logs and newspaper reports. Where data has been “derived” from a source (i.e. when previous vessel was recorded such as in BT898 crew lists) a lower-case 'd' has been appended i.e. BT98d.

Seaman ticket – introduced in 1845 and enabled a seaman to carry with him a note of his service and character. The system was replaced by the Third Register of Seamen in 1854.

Vessel – ship name

VesselID - links Vessels which served in both the British and American fisheries. Currently estimated to be less than 20 vessels

Key to sources for Crew List Database:

BT 1/25 - Board of Trade crew lists from the PRO usually from the period 1804 to 1806

BT98 or BT98d - Board of Trade crew lists from the PRO usually from the period 1830 to 1855. BT98d records have been derived from BT98 Crew Lists of Vessels on which a whaleman previously sailed.

ADMPR – Admiralty Protections from Impressment for the period 1777 to 1791 [ADM 7/389] and 1793 to 1811 [ADM 7/650] as extracted and compiled by A G E Jones as Part II of Ships Employed in the South Seas Trade 1775 – 1859 [aka as Volume 2] on pp 264 to 418 exclusive of Protections for the Greenland Fishery

BSWFDB – sourced from the British Southern Whale Fishery Database

NSW Muster Lists – crew lists recorded for vessels calling at Sydney 1818 to 1825

Hobart Muster Lists - – crew lists recorded for vessels calling at Hobart in the 1820s and 1830s

WD – Whales and Destiny by Edouard A. Stackpole

VRN – Vital Records of Nantucket

BGR – Barney Genealogical Record [Nantucket Historical Association]

ANDB – Australian National Dictionary of Biography

NM – Nautical Magazine

Other sources as noted i.e. Ships Log or Journal; newspapers; Court proceedings etc.

[Stavers Journal](#) – a record of the career of Thomas Reed Stavers with information on many other whaling members of the Stavers family – can be read online

Appendix A: Whaling Grounds used in the BSWF Database

Based on *Pre-20th Century Sperm Whaling Grounds* by John Bannister [CARP / HI / 3] but enhanced for the waters around Indonesia and New Guinea where there were a number of grounds frequented by the British whaling fleet.

PACIFIC	SOUTH ATLANTIC	INDIAN OCEAN
Coast of Chile	Coast of Brazil	Delagoa Bay
Onshore	Brazil Banks	Seychelles - Mahe Banks
Callao	Falklands	Coast of Arabia
Galapagos	South Georgia	Zanzibar
New Zealand	South Shetlands	Crozet Islands
Macquarie Island	Patagonia	Desolation Isle (Kerguelen)
Auckland Islands	Coast of Africa	Coast of New Holland
Offshore	Walvis Bay	
On the Line [W]	Saldanha Bay	
On the Line [E]	False Banks	NORTH ATLANTIC
Fiji-Samoa-Tonga	Plane	Hatteras
Middle Ground	Carroll	Western Ground
Tuamotus	Ascension	The Shoals
Across. ...21-27°S	Pigeon	Gulf of Guinea
New Guinea (North and East)	Tristan - C of Good Hope	Western Islands
China Sea		Southern Ground
Timor Straits		Canaries-African Coast
Moluccas		Charleston
Panama Bay		San Antonio
Coast of Japan		Caribbean Sea
Japan Ground		Gulf of Mexico
Bonin Islands		Commodore Morris
Hawaiian Islands		Steen
Northwest Coast		Portugal/Spain
California Coast		Cornell
		Twelve-Forty

