



Tracing Your Merchant Navy Ancestors (Family History)

Simon Wills

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What was a merchant seaman's life like in the past, what experiences would he have had, what were the ships like that he sailed in, and what risks did he run? Was he shipwrecked, rewarded for bravery, or punished? And how can you find out about an ancestor who was a member of the long British maritime tradition? Simon Wills' concise and informative historical guide takes the reader and researcher through the fascinating story of Britain's merchant service, and he shows you how to trace individual men and women and gain an insight into their lives.

In a series of short, information-packed chapters, he explains the expansion of Britain's global maritime trade and the fleets of merchant ships that sustained it in peace and war. He describes the lives, duties and tribulations of the generations of crews who sailed in these ships, whether as ordinary seamen or as officers, stewards, engineers and a myriad of other roles. In addition, he identifies the websites you can explore, the archives, records and books you can read, and the places you can visit in order to gain an understanding of what your seagoing ancestor did and the world he knew.

Simon Wills' practical handbook will be essential reading and reference for anyone who is keen to discover for themselves the secrets of our maritime past and of the crewmembers and ships that were part of it.

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