**The HCA Wage Dataset: a descriptive report**

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**Introduction**

The purpose of this document is to describe and explain the data gathered and presented in the HCA Wage Dataset, which was compiled as part of the research undertaken by the project ‘Sailing into Modernity’ during 2012-2014. The main objective of this project was to deliver a comparative analysis of the social, political, legal, and economic position of seafarers in four European countries (England, France, Italy, and the Netherlands) from the late sixteenth to the early eighteenth century.[[2]](#footnote-2)

The dataset can be downloaded in Microsoft Access format (.accdb) from the project’s resources webpage, on the website of the Centre for Maritime Historical Studies, University of Exeter, alongside datasets compiled by the project team from French, Italian, and Dutch sources.[[3]](#footnote-3) A critical analysis of this data within its historical context has been submitted for publication.[[4]](#footnote-4) This document presents only a limited interpretation of the data, and is intended solely to provide an introductory overview and accompanying guide for the dataset.

**Sources**

The wage data has been gathered from the papers of the High Court of Admiralty (HCA), held at The National Archives, UK (TNA), and all references given in the **Sources** field of the dataset are to these documents. The admiralty court was the premier institution in early modern England for dealing with maritime disputes, including some criminal cases such as piracy or theft, but primarily civil disputes between merchants, shipowners, and mariners. The jurisdiction of the court was contested by practitioners of common law throughout the seventeenth century, and eventually the court’s cognizance was restricted in certain areas, but it continued to be the major forum for lawsuits concerning wages (although mariners did sometimes sue in other local courts).[[5]](#footnote-5) These sources have previously been used by historians, amongst other purposes to collect data on wages, but so far no dataset based upon the HCA papers has been made publicly available.[[6]](#footnote-6)

Given the volume and richness of the HCA papers, my research has been structured around four samples of the years 1590-3, 1644-9, 1655-8, and 1682-5. These were selected partially on the basis of the court material itself, for the court was busiest and produced the most documents during the 1640s and 1650s.[[7]](#footnote-7) The 1644-9 and 1655-8 samples were therefore chosen as core research with the earlier and later samples providing comparative material to understand change over the course of the seventeenth century.[[8]](#footnote-8) They were also selected in consultation with the other members of the project, considering developments in the Mediterranean and in their areas of focus. The 1590s represent an early stage of the presence of both British and Dutch shipping in the Mediterranean.[[9]](#footnote-9) The 1640s witnessed political upheaval in Britain (with consequences for the HCA) at the same time as increasing definition of maritime law in both Venice and the Netherlands, while the 1650s saw conflict between Britain and the Netherlands, and in both decades English ships were employed by the Venetian state in their war against the Ottoman Empire.[[10]](#footnote-10) The years 1682-5 were selected to consider a later stage in British maritime activity, but also to compare with the consequences of Venetian legal reform in 1679 and the introduction of the *Ordonnance de la Marine* in France in 1681.[[11]](#footnote-11)

Within these samples, certain series of the HCA papers were consulted, principally those which contained the subject matter of the lawsuits. The first of these are the volumes of libels, allegations and decrees, which contain the claims of both plaintiffs and defendants, and also some judgments by the court.[[12]](#footnote-12) The second are the interrogatories, issued by one party to the witnesses of their opponents as a form of cross-examination.[[13]](#footnote-13) The third are examination and answer books, containing the responses of witnesses and defendants to the libels, allegations, and interrogatories.[[14]](#footnote-14) Finally, there are the court acts books, which provide much procedural detail on court cases but also some subject matter for those lawsuits which were heard summarily before the judge.[[15]](#footnote-15) My approach has been to identify and reconstruct cases across these series, although many have documents missing. Indeed, in May 1650 the court registrar complained that lawyers ‘oftentimes by consent amongst themselves’ failed to submit the necessary documentation, ‘whereby the Records are imperfect’.[[16]](#footnote-16)

**Figure 1: Detail from the HCA acts book, 30 May 1650, TNA HCA 3/43 fo. 497r**

Most of these series do not run in neat chronological volumes, so that in examining those volumes which cover the selected sample years data has also been collected for adjacent years where this has been available, although it was not always possible to pursue these lawsuits in their entirety (see Table 1). There are other series of records which could, with time, be added to these: the admiralty court’s criminal jurisdiction was excluded from this study, and the series of instance papers and miscellanea could offer much supplementary detail to the cases I have examined.[[17]](#footnote-17)

**Data**

These samples have yielded 1,817 entries across 237 voyages; all entries in the dataset have been assigned an individual ID number (**ID** field), and are organised by voyage, with each individual voyage also assigned a number (**Vge no** field). However, 71 entries present in the MS Access database have been excluded from all calculations based upon the dataset. There are 24 entries which give no wage, and are therefore unusable for statistical purposes, but which have been included in the database to ensure that this reflects the sources and the composition of each ship’s crew as closely as possible.[[18]](#footnote-18) Similarly, to make the four samples comparable in chronological terms, 47 entries across 17 voyages dated to the 1670s and 1690s have been excluded, but these entries have also been made available in the database.[[19]](#footnote-19) All excluded entries are marked in the database by blue text in the **Name** field. The calculations from the dataset which follow are therefore based upon the remaining 1,746 wage entries across 220 distinct voyages.

**Table 1: Wage entries in the HCA Wage Dataset**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Data collected & presented in database file |  |  | Dataset used for calculation |  |
| Sample Years | Total Entries | Excluded | Sample Years | Entries |
| 1589-1592 | 24 | - | 1589-1592 | 24 |
| 1640-1650 | 872 | 14 [no wage] | 1640-1650 | 858 |
| 1651-1662 | 347 | 8 [no wage] | 1651-1662 | 339 |
| 1672-1693 | 574 | 2 [no wage]47 [1670s/1690s] | 1680-1690 | 525 |
| Total | 1817 | 71 | Total | 1746 |

The data presented in the **Wage (s)** field is confined to monthly wages, the most common form of payment in merchant shipping, although by no means the only pay arrangement, and often only part of a seafarer’s income.[[20]](#footnote-20) There are 11 entries (0.6 per cent of the dataset) which list wages due to an individual seafarer and their servant or mate (see below, ‘Categories’); these presumably indicate higher wages than that individual could have claimed by themselves.[[21]](#footnote-21) A further 39 entries (2.2 per cent) represent estimates, either because the plaintiff claimed a lump sum (which has been divided by time served to calculate the monthly equivalent), or because the plaintiff had been hired in a foreign currency, in which case their own suggested conversion rate was used (see below, ‘Currencies and Conversion Rates’).[[22]](#footnote-22)

In the dataset the entries have been grouped and assigned **ID** numbers according to their voyage, with the voyages arranged in chronological order as far as possible, and each entry dated by the **Year** field. The specific dates of individuals’ contracts have also been given, where these are recorded, in the **Entered pay** and **Served until** fields, but the entries are arranged by the series of voyages, not of individual contracts. Just under two thirds of the entries give a date for hiring or discharge, and 92.9 per cent of these dated entries are recorded under the same year as their voyage began, with the sources disagreeing over dates for hiring or discharge in only 22 entries.[[23]](#footnote-23) The remaining 78 dated entries, representing seafarers hired during the later stages of a voyage, are out of chronological sequence (according to the **Year** field) but are grouped with their shipmates, and make up only 7.1 per cent of the dated entries.[[24]](#footnote-24) This suggests that the majority of wage contracts were agreed at the beginning of a voyage, making it reasonable to assign all undated entries to the start date of their corresponding voyage.

For the datable voyages, only 18 lawsuits took place in the same calendar year in which their voyage began; for 71 voyages the case occurred during the next calendar year, for 51 voyages it was 2 years later, and for 39 voyages it was 3 years or more. The maximum time elapsed between a voyage starting and a subsequent court case was 12 years. Given that the length of voyages varied considerably, and that court cases usually occurred only after previous negotiations between parties had failed, it is entirely predictable that lawsuits rarely occurred in the same year that the voyage began, or even in the same year that the voyage ended. However, as it is impossible to estimate the distance in time between the start of a voyage and an eventual court case with any degree of consistency, the 18.1 per cent of voyages (accounting for 20.1 per cent of entries) for which the evidence supplied no dates at all have not been given a conjectural date, but have been assigned the date of the source material.

A further potential difficulty in these documents, especially when subjecting them to statistical analysis, occurs with those cases in which some aspect of the wages were contested by the parties in the suit, for example their amount, the means of payment, who should pay, or whether they were due at all. In one extreme example, concerning the voyage of the *Sunn* (**Vge no** 26) to the Indian Ocean in 1644-7, one schedule of wages was submitted by the plaintiffs, the master Thomas Spencer gave another in his answer to them, and two more schedules survive with the two separate decrees which ordered the mariners to be paid, all of them differing on some points.[[25]](#footnote-25) As written contracts were very unusual for English sailors in this period there is rarely corroborating evidence, and it is therefore possible that plaintiffs claimed higher wages than the sum for which they had actually been hired.[[26]](#footnote-26)

Nevertheless, only 110 entries (6.3 per cent of the total dataset) feature competing claims about the value of wages due, which suggests that plaintiffs did not regularly exaggerate their wage claims, or perhaps that defendants did not generally focus upon this question as a legal tactic. Amongst these entries there is considerable variation, with the difference between the claims in each instance ranging from 1s to 59.4s, on mean average 6.2s; the difference could be as little as 1.2 per cent and as much as 98.0 per cent, with a mean of 21.1 per cent. It is very difficult to evaluate who (if anybody) submitted the more accurate details concerning wages in these particular cases. The differences could considerably alter these individual entries, but without much impact upon the dataset as a whole. Where different claims for a specific wage entry were encountered, or where individuals were promoted or demoted during the course of a voyage, the lowest initial value has been given in the **Wage (s)** field and used in all calculations based upon the dataset, to minimize as far as possible any exaggeration of wages by plaintiffs, but the alternative claims are given in the **Notes** field.

**Categories**

Where they were recorded in the evidence, individuals’ positions aboard ship have been given in the **Position** field. Contemporaries used a wide variety of labels to describe the different operational ranks of seafarers, but in broad terms they can be arranged into five categories, given in the **Category** field: masters, master’s mates, specialists, mariners, and unspecified.[[27]](#footnote-27) For the 22 entries where the seafarer was promoted or demoted during a voyage, their initial rank has been used for categorisation.[[28]](#footnote-28) However, the 11 individuals who held multiple posts at the same time, rather than being promoted or demoted between positions, have been categorised according to their highest rank – for example Francis Norham, who served as second mate and gunner of the *Ralphs Goodwill* in 1682-3, has been counted as a master’s mate and not a specialist.[[29]](#footnote-29)

**Table 2: Wage entries in the HCA Wage Dataset by category**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Sample | Master | Master’s mate | Specialist | Mariner | Unspecified |
| 1589-1592 | - | 1 | 2 | 1 | 20 |
| 1640-1650 | 13 | 22 | 77 | 19 | 727 |
| 1651-1662 | 7 | 13 | 67 | 35 | 217 |
| 1680-1690 | 20 | 55 | 148 | 108 | 194 |
| Total | 40 | 91 | 294 | 163 | 1158 |

Masters and master’s mates are the smallest categories, but are also the most straightforward to define and were the most regularly identified members of a ship’s crew in the source material. The master was appointed by the shipowners or freighting merchants (and may have been an owner or merchant himself), navigated the vessel, recruited and commanded the crew, and sometimes took financial responsibility over the ship’s cargo.[[30]](#footnote-30) A master’s mates were his assistants, who also participated in the navigation and command of the ship, and generally succeeded the master if he died during the voyage. They are sometimes distinguished in the records as ‘chief mate’ or ‘first mate’, ‘second mate’ and so on.

**Table 3: Wage entries of specialists in the HCA Wage Dataset**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Sample | Boatswain & mate | Carpenter & mate | Cook& mate | Gunner& mate | Quartermaster | Surgeon & mate | Other |
| 1589-1592 | - | 1 | - | 1 | - | - | - |
| 1640-1650 | 10 | 20 | 5 | 11 | 8 | 8 | 15 |
| 1651-1662 | 13 | 14 |  7 | 8 | 9 | 7 | 9 |
| 1680-1690 | 29 | 45 | 19 | 21 | 14 | 5 | 17 |
| Total |  52 | 80 | 31 | 41 | 31 | 20 | 41 |

Specialists represent the largest category besides unspecified entries, and probably the most complex; contemporaries also called them officers, but ‘specialists’ has the advantage that it avoids confusion with any modern military connotations.[[31]](#footnote-31) This category includes those seafarers with a specific position aboard ship, some of which were common to all ships and had quite clearly defined roles, while others were less common, or less precise, but nevertheless deserve to be distinguished from seafarers without such a role.[[32]](#footnote-32) This category includes 38 entries (12.9 per cent of specialists, 2.2 per cent of the dataset) recorded as specialists’ mates.[[33]](#footnote-33) The subcategories of specialist are set out in Table 3: ‘other’ includes caulkers, clerks, coopers, coxwains, pilots, pursers, sailmakers, stewards, and trumpeters. These entries form 16.8 per cent of the dataset, but they represent 50.0 per cent of those entries with a recorded rank. By contrast, in a survey of 3,137 London seafarers undertaken in 1629, 75.6 per cent were listed as mariners, and only 10.3 per cent as specialists.[[34]](#footnote-34) If they are not due solely to distortion by the high proportion of unspecified entries, it is possible that the high ratio of specialists to other categories in the HCA material reflects a preference for specialists to appear as witnesses in the admiralty court (although this dataset is not based solely on witness statements), or perhaps specialists were more likely to sue for their wages.[[35]](#footnote-35) On the other hand, as the HCA records relate to specific voyages but the survey provides a static snapshot of the seafaring community, this discrepancy may suggest that specialist positions were occasional, held only for a specific voyage, while ‘mariner’ was a vocational definition appropriate to seafarers throughout their career. In other words, some of those listed as a ‘mariner’ in the 1629 survey may have held specialist roles aboard certain ships, but at other times were not defined by these roles.

Notwithstanding its definition elsewhere, ‘mariner’ has a relatively restricted meaning within this dataset: those seafarers who did not hold a specialist role aboard ship, as far as it is possible to determine from the evidence in each court case. This includes those described in the sources as ‘boy’ (there are 9 in the dataset), ‘common man’, ‘common mariner’, ‘foremast man’, ‘ordinary mariner’, ‘seaman’, and ‘servant’.[[36]](#footnote-36) These terms appear to have been used imprecisely and interchangeably in this period, although ‘mariner’ generally appears in legal and official documents while ‘seaman’ was commonly used as a stereotype in ballads and similar sources.[[37]](#footnote-37) As a result this category probably includes a diverse range of seafarers, some of them highly skilled ‘career’ mariners, others working at sea only temporarily, but the evidence does not permit more accurate distinctions. Additionally, ‘servant’ is a rather uncertain term, as seafarers sometimes described themselves as ‘servants’ (in the sense of ‘employees’) of a particular ship, and the word was also interchangeable with ‘apprentice’ and could, therefore, suggest a skilled or educational position, rather than a simply subordinate one.[[38]](#footnote-38) This is perhaps most likely with those seafarers listed as servant to a master, master’s mate, or specialist.[[39]](#footnote-39) However, there are only 22 servants in the dataset, and these entries can therefore be included within the category ‘mariner’ on the assumption that they did not have a specific position in the same way that specialists did, and without danger of substantially distorting the dataset.[[40]](#footnote-40)

Unspecified entries are the most problematic, as they make up 66.3 per cent of the dataset. The detail in the records improves over time, as unspecified entries drop from 83.3 and 84.7 per cent of the sample in 1589-1592 and 1640-1650 respectively to 64.0 per cent in 1651-1662 and 36.8 per cent in 1680-1690. It is likely that a very large proportion of these entries were mariners (in the limited sense described above), but judging by their wage claims some of them were almost certainly specialists, and a few were probably master’s mates or masters. There is too much variation of wage level within the categories of mariner, specialist, and master’s mate, and too much overlap between the categories, to assign unspecified entries to a category on the basis of wage level alone.

**Regions**

A substantial proportion of the voyages recorded in the dataset – 79.5 per cent, including 77.7 per cent of entries – featured details in the sources concerning their intended or actual destinations, listed in the **Destinations** field, and the data can be categorised according to the region in which the voyage took place, given in the **Region** field. These divisions are tentative, however, because it is possible that further destinations were not mentioned in the evidence. ‘Atlantic’ here refers to transatlantic voyages, to the Atlantic coast of Africa, the American continent, the Caribbean, and fishing voyages to Newfoundland and Greenland. ‘Indian Ocean’ includes voyages to eastern Africa, India and Southeast Asia. ‘Mediterranean’ is probably the clearest and most self-explanatory category. ‘Northern Europe’ includes coastal voyages around Britain, the Baltic, the North Sea coastline of Europe and the Atlantic coast of France and Iberia. The most significant trends are the considerable rise in the number of Atlantic voyages and the slight decline in the number of voyages to the Mediterranean, although the total number of voyages to each region in each sample is small and this trend is therefore not conclusively established.

**Table 4: Wage entries in the HCA Wage Dataset by region (voyages / entries)**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Sample | Atlantic  | Indian Ocean | Mediterranean | Northern Europe | Unspecified |
| 1589-1592 | - | - | 3 / 20 | 1 / 4 | - |
| 1640-1650 | 15 / 131 | 3 / 190 | 22 / 301 | 9 / 59 | 12 / 177 |
| 1651-1662 | 23 / 117 | 2 / 41 | 18 / 83 | 8 / 41 | 9 / 57 |
| 1680-1690 | 40 / 210 | 4 / 13 | 14 / 110 | 14 / 36 | 23 / 156 |
| Total | 78 / 458 | 9 / 244 | 57 / 514 | 32 / 140 | 44 / 390 |

A further difficulty with this division is that 19 voyages, representing 8.6 per cent of voyages and 10.6 per cent of entries, travelled across more than one region. In these cases the voyages have been assigned to the region in which, as far as it is possible to determine, they spent most of their voyage, or that they were originally intended for, because the intended destination of the voyage would have influenced the wage contracts of the crew. This is inevitably a subjective decision, but the proportion of cross-regional voyages is relatively small for all samples except 1640-1650 (none in 1589-92, 6 voyages and 17 entries in 1651-1662, 4 voyages and 13 entries in 1680-1690), and it is therefore unlikely that assigning these voyages differently would change the dataset substantially.[[41]](#footnote-41)

For the 1640-1650 sample, 155 entries (18.7 per cent of the sample) are from voyages to more than one region.[[42]](#footnote-42) However, 134 of these entries are from just two voyages, the *Lewes* (34 entries) and the *William* (100 entries).[[43]](#footnote-43) The *Lewes* sailed to Lisbon, Alicante, Genoa, Venice and Zante, and then to Amsterdam, and is therefore categorised as a Mediterranean voyage; the *William* sailed to India and China, then put into Alicante and Livorno during the return journey, and is therefore categorised as an Indian Ocean voyage. If these two voyages are excluded then cross-regional voyages account for only 2.9 per cent of wage entries in the dataset.

**Currencies & Conversion Rates**

Wages in the admiralty court were usually rendered in pounds, shillings and pence, but all wages are presented in the **Wage (s)** field in shillings for ease of calculation and comparison. The wage entries include 26 entries (1.5 per cent of the dataset) in which the wages were originally contracted in another currency, and these have been converted using the contemporary estimated exchange rates provided in the evidence.[[44]](#footnote-44) Thomas Williams (**ID** 49), purser of the *John* (**Vge no** 6)in 1640-1645, and Thomas Jones (**ID** 897), master’s mate of the *James* (**Vge no** 66)in 1651, were both hired for dollars; Williams offered an exchange rate of 4s 6*d* = 1 dollar, which was also used to convert Jones’s claim (see also Table 5 below).[[45]](#footnote-45) In the 1651-1662 sample, 24 wage entries in 3 voyages concerned contracts originally agreed in guilders.[[46]](#footnote-46) These were converted at the rate of 2s = 1 guilder, which was suggested by contemporary HCA sources.[[47]](#footnote-47)

 In addition, the admiralty court evidence provides details of conversation rates in certain ports, mostly in the Mediterranean, as set out in Table 5 (where the evidence contained no date, the source date is given).

**Table 5: Currency exchange rates recorded in the HCA**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Year | Place | Exchange | Source |
| 1641? | Alicante | 1 dollar = 4s 4*d* – 4s 6*d* | TNA HCA 13/59, deposition of John Byam, 8 February 1643[/4], fo. 56r |
| 1641 | Genoa | 1 dollar = 82 – 92 *sols* | TNA HCA 13/62, depositions of Job Throckmorton and Joshua Towler, 11 April 1650 |
| 1641 | Lisbon, Zante | 1 dollar = 4s 4*d* – 4s 6*d* | TNA HCA 13/118, answers of Thomas Burley & co, 29 March 1644, Thomas Beale, undated, and Josia Tewe, undated |
| 1641 | England | 1 dollar = 4s – 4s 3*d* | TNA HCA 13/118, answers of Thomas Burley & co, 29 March 1644, and Josa Tewe, undated |
| 1641-1642 | Venice | 1 dollar = 4s – 4s 7.25*d* | TNA HCA 24/106/19, 20 |
| 1641-1643 | Constantinople | 1 dollar = 4s 4*d* | TNA HCA 24/106/98 |
| 1644 | Cadiz | 1 dollar = 4s | TNA HCA 13/119, answer of Henry Jones, 14 November 1645 |
| 1648 | Smyrna | 1 dollar = 4s 9*d* – 5s 7*d* | TNA HCA 13/62, depositions of Nicholas Wilde and Thomas Thoroughgood, 5 December 1649 |
| 1648 | Genoa, Livorno | 1 dollar = 4s 8*d* | TNA HCA 24/109/323 |
| 1648 | Malaga | 1 dollar = 4s 6*d* - 4s 9*d* | TNA HCA 3/43, fo. 106r, HCA 24/109/329 |
| 1648-1649 | Livorno | 1 dollar = 4s *6d* – 5s | TNA HCA 13/122, answer of Thomas Hughes, 21 November 1649; HCA 24/109/205 |
| 1648-1649 | Smyrna | 1 dollar = 5s 6*d* | TNA HCA 13/122, answer of Thomas Hughes, 21 November 1649 |
| 1649 | Smyrna | 1 dollar = 4s 6*d* | TNA HCA 13/62, depositions of Richard Jenkins and John Paine, 16 April 1650 |
| 1649 | Marseilles, Malaga | 1 dollar = 4s 6*d* | TNA HCA 24/109/82 |
| 1649-1650 | Venice, Malaga, Marseilles | 1 dollar = 4s 6*d* – 5s | TNA HCA 13/62, depositions of William Haddock and Thomas Jones, 12 April 1650 |
| 1650 | Smyrna | 1 dollar = 4s 5*d* | TNA HCA 24/109/333 |
| 1653 | Venice | 1 ducat = 4s 3*d* | TNA HCA 3/46, fo. 145v |
| 1662 | Livorno | 1 dollar = 4s 9*d* | TNA HCA 13/129, answer of Jeremy Tye, 15 August 1662 |
| 1673 | Malaga | 1 dollar = 4s 6*d* | TNA HCA 13/78, depositions of Thomas Goddard and Obadiah Sedgwick, 26 May 1676, Richard Bendarcus, 16 June 1676, and John Bush, 21 June 1676 |
| 1682 | Genoa |  |  |
| 1683 | Genoa | 1 dollar = 5s 6*d* | TNA HCA 13/132, answer of Thomas Smith, undated; HCA 24/121/109 |
| 1685 | Mozambique | 1 dollar = 7s 6*d* | TNA HCA 13/79, deposition of Roger Smith, 13 June 1685 |
| 1688 | Alicante | 1 dollar = 4s 4*d* – 4s 6*d* | TNA HCA 13/132, answer of Henry Wallis, 11 July 1688; TNA HCA 23/22/91 |

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2. More information concerning the project, including a list of publications, can be found at the project webpage: <http://humanities.exeter.ac.uk/history/research/centres/maritime/research/modernity/>. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. URL of file [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Article details [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. See George F. Steckley, ‘Merchants and the admiralty court during the English revolution’, *The American Journal of Legal History*, 22 (1978), pp. 137-75; George F. Steckley, ‘Litigious mariners: wage cases in the seventeenth-century admiralty court’, *Historical Journal*, 42 (1999), pp. 315-45; George F. Steckley, ‘Bottomry bonds in the seventeenth-century admiralty court’, *The American Journal of Legal History*, 45 (2001), pp. 256-77; George F. Steckley, ‘Collisions, prohibitions, and the admiralty court in seventeenth-century London’, *Law and History Review*, 21 (2003), pp. 41-67; Richard J. Blakemore, ‘The legal world of English sailors, c. 1575-1729’ in Maria Fusaro, Bernard Allaire, Richard J. Blakemore and Tijl Vanneste, eds, *Law, labour and empire: comparative perspectives on seafarers, c. 1500-1800* (Basingstoke, 2015), pp. 100-20. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. Ralph Davis, *The rise of the English shipping industry in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries* (Newton Abbot, 1972), pp. 135-8; Kenneth R. Andrews, *Ships, money and politics: seafaring and naval enterprise in the reign of Charles I* (Cambridge, 1991), pp. 76; Peter Earle, ‘English sailors, 1570-1775’, in Paul c. van Royen, Jaap R. Bruijn and Jan Lucassen, eds., *‘Those emblems of hell’? European sailors and the maritime labour market, 1570-1870* (St John’s, Newfoundland, 1997), pp. 73-92, at pp. 82-4; Peter Earle, *Sailors: English merchant seamen 1650-1775* (London, 1998), pp. 29-34; Marcus Rediker, *Between the devil and the deep blue sea: merchant seamen, pirates and the Anglo-American maritime world, 1700-1750* (Cambridge, 1987),pp. 119, 121-24, 304-6; Cheryl A. Fury, *Tides in the affairs of men: the social history of Elizabethan seamen, 1580-1603* (London, 2002), pp. 93-6, 99-100. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. George F. Steckley, ‘Instance cases at admiralty in 1657: a court “packed up with sutors”’, *The Journal of Legal History*, 7 (1986), pp. 68-83. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. I am grateful to the MarineLives project, especially Colin Greenstreet, for assistance and discussion with the 1650s sample: see <http://www.marinelives.org/>. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. Michela D’Angelo, ‘In the “English” Mediterranean (1511-1815)’, *Journal of Mediterranean Studies*, 12 (2002), pp. 271-85; Molly Greene, ‘Beyond the northern invasion: the Mediterranean in the seventeenth century’, *Past & Present*, 174 (2002), pp. 42-71; Colin Heywood, ‘The English in the Mediterranean, 1600-1630: a post-Braudelian perspective on the “nothern invasion”’, in Maria Fusaro, Colin Heywood, and Mohamed-Salah Omri, eds, *Trade and cultural exchange in the early modern Mediterranean: Braudel’s maritime legacy* (London, 2010), pp. 23-44; Tijl Vanneste, ‘Sailing through the strait: seamen’s professional trajectories from a segmented labour market in Holland to a fragmented Mediterranean’ in Fusaro, Allaire, Blakemore, and Vanneste, eds, *Law, labour, and empire*, pp. 123-40. [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. Steckley, ‘Merchants and the admiralty court’; J. R. Jones, *The Anglo-Dutch wars of the seventeenth century* (London, 1996); Maria Fusaro, ‘Public service and private trade: Northern seamen in seventeenth-century Venetian courts of justice’, *International Journal of Maritime History*, 27 (2015), pp. 3-25. [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. Maria Fusaro, ‘The invasion of northern litigants: English and Dutch seamen in Mediterranean courts of law’, and Bernard Allaire, ‘Between Oléron and Colbert: the evolution of French maritime law until the seventeenth century’, in Fusaro, Allaire, Blakemore, and Vanneste, eds, *Law, labour, and empire*, pp. 21-42 and 79-99. [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. TNA HCA 24/57-60, 106-109, 112-113, 144, and 121. [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. TNA HCA 23/4, 14-15, 18, and 22. [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
14. TNA HCA 13/28-30, 59-62, 70-72, 78-79, 96, 101, 119-122, 127-129, and 132. [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
15. TNA HCA 3/21-22, 41-43, 46-48, and 56. [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
16. TNA HCA 3/43, fo. 497r. [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
17. TNA HCA 1; HCA 15; HCA 30. [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
18. **ID** 159, 178, 184, 190, 195, 202, 217, 227, 354, 356, 357, 484, 575, 669, 932, 933, 986, 1058, 1146, 1147, 1148, 1216, 1796 and 1797. [↑](#footnote-ref-18)
19. **Vge no** 126-140 and 237, encompassing **ID** 1244-1286 and 1841-1817. [↑](#footnote-ref-19)
20. This is discussed in more detail in my article. [↑](#footnote-ref-20)
21. **ID** 6, 50, 55, 362, 501, 820, 846, 858, 1098, 1228, 1440 and 1441. [↑](#footnote-ref-21)
22. **ID** 147, 517, 897, 934-941, 1014, 1038, 1145, 1153-1163, 1165-1169, 1500, 1511, 1520, 1601-1602, 1699-1701, 1703 and 1705. [↑](#footnote-ref-22)
23. **ID** 517-518, 521-523, 693-695, 706, 713, 980, 982, 1075-1076, 1083, 1122-1123, 1125, 1217, 1219, and 1634-1635. [↑](#footnote-ref-23)
24. **ID** 66-71, 79-84, 544-552, 636-637, 639-671, 706-713, 715-719, 1306-1310, 1342-1344, 1363, 1367, 1528, 1737-1739, 1742-1747, and 1761. [↑](#footnote-ref-24)
25. TNA HCA 13/120, answer of Thomas Spencer, 21 November 1647; HCA 24/108,113, 132, 160; **Vge no** 26. [↑](#footnote-ref-25)
26. Throughout the seventeenth century there were several apparently unsuccessful attempts by both seafarers and the English government to make written contracts mandatory: Blakemore, ‘Legal world’, pp. 105, 119. [↑](#footnote-ref-26)
27. ‘Operational rank’ is used here to mean the position an individual seafarer held aboard a specific ship, and should be distinguished from their social or economic rank, though these different kinds of status would reflect and influence one another. [↑](#footnote-ref-27)
28. **ID** 59, 487, 522-524, 530, 1293, 1315, 1349, 1378, 1453, 1467, 1513, 1565, 1584, 1600, 1618, 1647, 1694, 1733, 1762, and 1770. [↑](#footnote-ref-28)
29. TNA HCA 24/121/80; **ID** 1425. The others are **ID** 323, 927, 1037, 1221, 1229, 1292, 1301, 1382, 1477, and 1787. [↑](#footnote-ref-29)
30. The role of shipmasters has drawn considerable attention from historians: W. Senior, ‘The master-mariners authority’, *The Law Quarterly Review*, 136 (1918), pp. 347-56; Davis, *English shipping industry*, pp. 126-32 and ch. 8; G. V. Scammell, ‘Manning the English merchant service in the sixteenth century’, *Mariner’s Mirror*, 56 (1970), pp. 131-54, at pp. 144-8; Pauline Croft, ‘English mariners trading to Spain and Portugal, 1558-1625’, *Mariner’s Mirror*, 69 (1983), pp. 251-66; G. V. Scammell, ‘The merchant service master in early modern England’, in G. V. Scammell, *Seafaring, sailors and trade, 1450-1750* (Aldershot, 2003), pp. 1-22; Robert D. Hicks, *Voyage to Jamestown: practical navigation in the age of discovery* (Annapolis, MD, 2011); Richard J. Blakemore, ‘Navigating culture: navigational instruments as cultural artefacts’, *Journal for Maritime Research*, 14 (2012), pp. 31-44; Richard J. Blakemore, ‘Orality and mutiny: authority and speech amongst the seafarers of early modern London’, in Tom Cohen and Lesley Twomey, eds, *Spoken word and social practice: orality in Europe (1400-1700)* (Leiden, 2015), pp. 253-79. [↑](#footnote-ref-30)
31. This term was originally used by Davis, *English shipping industry*, pp. 110-21. [↑](#footnote-ref-31)
32. A comparative table of roles aboard early modern merchant ships, with Italian, Dutch, English, and French terms can be found at the project’s resources webpage: <http://humanities.exeter.ac.uk/media/universityofexeter/collegeofhumanities/history/researchcentres/centreformaritimehistoricalstudies/pdfs/RolesOnBoard.pdf>. [↑](#footnote-ref-32)
33. **ID** 59, 373, 382-384, 517, 530, 644, 648, 650, 664, 673, 943, 953, 958, 966, 983, 1022, 1024, 1039, 1063, 1066, 1100, 1179, 1182, 1303, 1336, 1397, 1427, 1443-1444, 1446, 1496, 1531, 1717, 1730, 1778, 1782. [↑](#footnote-ref-33)
34. TNA HCA SP 16/135, fos 111r-27v. [↑](#footnote-ref-34)
35. For statistical analysis of witness depositions, see Vincent V. Patarino, ‘The religious shipboard culture of sixteenth and seventeenth-century English sailors’, in Cheryl A. Fury, ed., *The social history of English seamen, 1485-1649* (Woodbridge, 2012), pp. 141-92, at pp. 176-81; Richard J. Blakemore, ‘The London & Thames maritime community during the British civil wars, 1640-1649’ (unpublished Ph.D. thesis, Cambridge, 2013), pp. 34-43, 69-72. [↑](#footnote-ref-35)
36. The 9 boys are **ID** 671, 916, 1379, 1162-1163, 1300, 1654, 1668, and 1676. [↑](#footnote-ref-36)
37. For a discussion of contemporary terms and stereotyping of seafarers, see Blakemore, ‘London & Thames maritime community’, pp. 25-33; Blakemore, ‘Orality and mutiny’, pp. 255-9. [↑](#footnote-ref-37)
38. For example Samuel Fry (**ID** 942) was a surgeon, and servant to one Edmund Higgs, while Timothy Cary (**ID** 1292) was a cook and ‘able seaman’, and servant to Thomas Smith, master of his ship; both have been categorised as specialists. On maritime apprenticeships see John Webb, ‘Apprenticeship in the maritime occupations at Ipswich, 1596-1651’, *Mariner’s Mirror*, 46 (1960), pp. 29-34; Cheryl A. Fury, ‘Training and education in the Elizabethan maritime community, 1585-1603’, *Mariner’s Mirror*, 85 (1999), pp. 147-61; Blakemore, ‘Navigating culture’, p. 37. [↑](#footnote-ref-38)
39. **ID** 54, 370, 981, 1291, 1366, 1583, and 1764. [↑](#footnote-ref-39)
40. Besides those listed in n. 37, these are **ID** 52, 328, 363, 366, 368, 403, 1038, 1289-1290, 1326, 1468, 1478, 1496, 1583, and 1765. This does not include the 11 seafarers who were paid for themselves and their servants mentioned above, p. 5 n. 20, where the servants and their wages were not recorded separately. [↑](#footnote-ref-40)
41. **Vge no** 11, 12, 36, 47, 51, 67, 73, 91, 96, 106, 120, 141, 145, 153, and 234, encompassing **ID** 907-908, 934-941, 1046-1047, 1072-1073, 1126, 1217-1219, 1287, 1296-1298, 1327-1334, and 1801. [↑](#footnote-ref-41)
42. Excluding those listed in n. 39, these are **Vge no** 12, 21, 36-38, 47, and 51, encompassing **ID** 110-122, 521-526, 674, and 692. [↑](#footnote-ref-42)
43. **Vge no** 8 and 16, encompassing **ID** 51-84 and 146-253. [↑](#footnote-ref-43)
44. On currency exchange in this period see John J. McCusker, *Money and exchange in Europe and America: a handbook* (London, 1978); Markus A. Denzel, *Handbook of world exchange rates, 1590-1914* (Farnham, 2010). [↑](#footnote-ref-44)
45. TNA HCA 13/62, deposition of Thomas Williams, 1 November 1647; HCA 13/71, deposition of John Wood, 26 August 1654. [↑](#footnote-ref-45)
46. **Vge no** 73, 109, and 111, encompassing **ID** 934-941, 1153-1163, and 1165-1169. [↑](#footnote-ref-46)
47. TNA HCA 13/61, deposition of Hercules Arentson, 19 May 1649; HCA 24/108/328. [↑](#footnote-ref-47)