

HUNTS UNIVERSAL YACHT LIST

1850-1914

Introduction

The Association of Yachting Historians has long set itself the goal of scanning and making available to its members, and others, materials which are difficult to find, but which cast an eye over the history of yachting in the British Isles. What we are now delivering has only come about as a result of a protracted effort involving many parties.

We have already released scans of the complete works of *Lloyd's Register of Yachts* from 1878– 1980 as well as *The Yachtsman Magazine* from 1891–1940.

We have now set ourselves the rather more ambitious target of scanning the whole of *Hunt's Universal Yacht List* (1850–1914), a series that predates *Lloyd's* by 28 years.

It should be appreciated that *Hunt's Universal Yacht List* also supplements *Lloyd's* since not all yachts that appear in *Hunt's* also appear in *Lloyd's* (and vis versa).

History

In 1847 the London based firm of Hunt and Son, published George Holland Ackers "*Universal Yacht Signals*" – which set out various signal flag combinations for passing messages from one vessel to another. (6843 meaning "My stock of wine is out. Can you spare any?"). Ackers suggested that Robert Hunt consider publishing an annual digest of yachts, detailing their size, ownership and the clubs to which they belonged.

As the information was to be supplied by the clubs themselves, the early editions of *Hunt's Universal Yacht List* probably provides the best indicator of the development of yachting, year by year.

It did not confine itself just to British yacht clubs. The publishers sent out questionnaires to yacht clubs in Europe, the USA and Russia. The new work first appeared in 1848. (Later the editor requested that yachtsmen themselves provide the information – a less reliable source in terms of accuracy and comprehensiveness).

It was to prove to be a forerunner of *Lloyd's Register of Yachts* which ran from 1868 to 1980, while *Hunt's Universal Yacht List* continued successfully down to 1914, when the advent of the Great War put an end to its publication.

Unfortunately, as the early volumes were not issued between hard covers, they were treated as no more than ephemera. Happily, we have successfully been able to trace all editions except for 1848 and 1849.

Acknowledgements

None of this could have been achieved without the generous funding by a member of our Association, who also gave up his precious volumes for machine scanning allowing us to contain our costs.

In addition, this exercise could not have been completed without the kind help and support of libraries, yacht clubs and individuals, both here and in the USA. They are listed alphabetically, but our grateful thanks go out to all. They are:

Libraries

Bartlett Maritime Research Centre, National Maritime Museum, Cornwall
Bodleian Library, Oxford University
British Library, London
Caird Library, National Maritime Museum Greenwich
G.W. Blunt White Library, Mystic Seaport Museum, Mystic, Conn.
National Library of Scotland, Edinburgh
New York Public Library

Yacht Clubs

New York YC
Royal Thames YC
Royal Yacht Squadron

Individuals

Martin Black
Iain McAllister
Hal Sisk