

The following selection of events are those which could have affected or at least come to the attention of a ship's Captain trading out of Bristol in the mid to late 19th century.

This chronology was compiled for a TV programme with the help of the late Frank Reece Winstone, photographic diarist of Bristol. Details of photographs associated with these events can be found in his many publications. A list of his books can be found at:

http://www.radisol.com/interests/reece_winstone_publications.htm

We hope to expand this chronology as event information becomes available and we welcome any verifiable items you may like to contribute – please send them using our enquiry form (http://www.history4u.info/enquiry_form.htm)

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| 1854 | | Sailing Clipper 1200 ton, 3 masted "Petrel" Bristol to New York, Cabin £14, Steerage, £5 guineas. Passenger food for the week included: 3 & 1/2 lbs good bread, 2oz tea, 8oz Sugar, 2oz Salt. |
| 1858 | Jun 4 | The Morning Star, a familiar sight at the Bush tea warehouse; opposite was the Tucker & Hoskins Wharf, [nowadays Princes wharf]. |
| 1885 | Jan 15 | 66ft long 50 ton whale washed ashore in the river Severn, brought to Bristol & displayed at 6d a look. Inspired a popular song. Would they have sung this in the Noah's Ark Pub in Bedminster? |
| 1875 | Feb | Downs Railway Tunnel completed. |
| | May 3 | Albert Hall, Hotwells, opened. |
| | Aug | First tram service opened. |
| | Oct 7 | Four killed at South Liberty Pit, Ashton. |
| | | Samuel Plimsoll, (born 1824, MP for Bristol in 1868), has his safety load mark for ships - the 'Plimsoll Line' - established. This earns him the soubriquet "The Sailors Friend". |
| 1876 | | Great fire in Christmas Street. |
| | Aug 1 | Amalgamation of Great Western Railway (GWR) and Bristol and Exeter Railway |
| | Oct | Central Library opened. |

1877		White Hart, Jacob's Wells, demolished.
	Jan 1	Acquisition of new Mansion House.
	Feb 24	Avonmouth Dock opened by the mayor in the steamer "Juno"
	Mar 27	Insurance Companies disband their fire brigades and a Municipal Brigade established six months later.
	May 29	Bristol Evening News established.
	Aug 22	Demolition of St Werburgh's commenced.
	Sept	Black Rock Quarry (working since 1868 for road material) closes.
	Oct 14	Gale felled 160 trees.
	Dec 13	Fry's Cocoa & Chocolate factory in the heart of Bristol expands yet again. Giant new chimney stack erected, 200ft high. This was a far cry from their first premises, a small shop in the High street opened by the young Quaker Doctor from Wiltshire in the 1720's.
1878		Plans for the city to purchase Avonmouth Docks; ownership effected in 1884.
	Jan 14	1,200 gallons of Cocoa, Tea and Coffee sold at the three houses of Bristol Tavern and Club Company.
	April 16	13th suicide from the Clifton Suspension Bridge.
	May 12	The 600 ton "Gypsy" of Waterford aground on the right bank of the Avon near Black Rock quarry.
	July 12	The Prince of Wales arrived Temple Meads. "Pleasantest and most impressive sight of all was the seething mass of population.
	Nov 28	The Electric Light was most successfully used in the Cathedral nave.
1879	March 27	"The Electric Light" displayed on Prince Street Bridge: working cost 2½d. per hour. "Equal to many thousands of candles".
	May 3	Water let into Portishead Dock (June 28th, the first ship, the "Lyn", entered).
	Nov	Telephone Exchange opened: twenty subscribers.

- 1880 June 24 Hotwells Tram service opened.
- 1882 June 15 Sir Greville Smyth gave Ashton Park to city.
- Oct 17 Fourth Musical Festival attended by H.R.H. The Duke of Edinburgh, Queen Victoria's second son (d. 1900). Halle conducted.
- Oct 24 Most serious floods yet in areas surrounding Baptist Mills; in Hereford Street, Bedminster, the waters were 8-ft deep.
- 1883 Nov 21 New Bedminster Bridge opened.
- 1884 Feb 19 Council purchased Avonmouth and Portishead Docks.
- Jul 1 New Fish Market in St Nicholas Street opened.
- 1885 Jan Proposed to extend City boundary to include Sneyd Park, Horfield, Totterdown and Knowle.
- May 25 Annual Horse Parade: 700 animals on show.
- June 8 Redland Library opened.
- June 30 Sunday Concerts were started by a group of gentlemen interested in the welfare of the working classes - 20,000 attended and audiences grew in 1886.
- July Merchant Venturers' School, Unity Street opened.
- Aug 1 Children's Hospital new building opened. Institution founded 1866 by Mr Mark Whitwill and friends.
- Aug 29 Death of Mr E S Robinson (Mayor 1866). 54-carriage funeral. "A colossal and prosperous business remains a monument of his sound judgment and undeviating integrity".
- Nov 30 Floods at Black Swan, Stapleton Road, up to the counter in bar.
- 1886 Sept 10 Dean Lane Colliery explosion: 8 killed.
- Nov 16 Flooding of the Froom to be offset by making a culvert from Broad Weir to Bristol Bridge.

- 1887 June 21/25 Queen's Golden Jubilee celebrations: 30,000 assembled on Downs.
- Oct 22 At Bristol Bridge 25,000 watched unveiling of statue of Samuel Morley; 18 years M.P for Bristol.
- Oct 25 Wine Street Pump disappeared in the previous night.
- 1888 June 8 Cathedral illuminated by "the electric light" to celebrate restorations.
- 1889 Jan 28 Dean Lane Colliery explosion: 4 killed.
- 1897 July/Sept Cabot Tower on Brandon Hill, overlooking Queens Parade completed. This celebrated John Cabot's discovery of North America.
- Royal Navy Squadron of Ships of the Line - Trafalgar, Nile, Thunderer, Sans Pareil - visit Bristol Channel in honour of the British Association for the Advancement of Science's Congress being held in Bristol.
- 1898 Feb Flooding in Bristol the worst for over 40 years, many low-lying districts inundated.
- Sept Signor Marconi gives a demonstration of his Wireless Telegraphy at Bristol.
- 1899 Queen Victoria visits Bristol and knights the city's Mayor, Herbert Ashman, on the Council House steps - a singular honour.
- The Port of Bristol: provision of new wharves and the new hydraulic cranes.
- 1900 Summary of the century's changes
- * Increase in the size and Population of the city from sixty four thousand to a third of a million.
 - * Port Shipping cargoes increase sevenfold to one and a half million tons.
 - * Tramcars serve most areas of the City.
 - * Newspapers reduced in price from six pence to a halfpenny.
 - * Sixty-five thousand children in free public schools