Introduction on how to use the Prize Papers Portal

β-Version
Eight ways into the collection
Takes you right to the digitized documents

Overview of all ships available at time of access

Overview of all court processes available at time of access

Overview of all types of documents identified at time of access; access to the documents available by type

Overview of subject suggestions: Thematic entry to the documents

Access to the materiality focus of the project

Access to the bound volumes of Prize Appeals

General search
Accessing via “Documents” takes you to an overview of all documents available in the portal at time of access. You can pick any document which will take you to the digital copy.

To filter the documents on display to your interest, you can use the following filter options…
Limit the search results according to the
• type of document or
• subject you are interested in. Only related documents will remain on display.

Filtering by scripttype will provide you with all documents available in
• Print or
• Handwriting

*with future modules of the digitization being released the choices of specific scripttypes is going to grow

Limit the time frame you are looking for with this slider bar
Accessing via “Ships” takes you to an overview of all ships available in the portal at time of access. You can pick any ship which will take you to the information available on that ship.

To filter the ships on display to your interest, you can use the following filter options…
Flags
All ships were sailing under a flag to mark their affiliation. Flags identified may refer to ruling authorities (as precursors to national affiliation) or further institutions.

Place
In the β-version of the portal the place filter will limit search results to any ship related to the place you chose. The place may have been the place of a ship’s departure, an intended destination, a point of capture, or a port where a ship was brought into.

To learn which type of place relation is relevant to the ships on display, please look into the data available on the ship.

Lading
‘Lading’ allows to filter ships by what they were transporting. That includes all souls onboard.

Ship class
If you are interested in the types of ships sailing the oceans, use this filter. Types are either organized by the function of a ship (i.e. a fishing cutter or a war ship) or by construction (i.e. sloop or brigantine). Due to this categorization scheme, a ship may fall into more than one „ship class”
Journey type

The type of journey is crucial to the Prize Papers collection of data. To visualize a ship’s voyage in future versions of the portal, a voyage is split up into several legs. Each leg is referred to as ‘journey’.

There are five types of journeys:

Journey interrupted by capture
The part of a ship’s journey on which it was captured

Forced journey
The journey after capture on which a ship was forced to go to a given port

Capture journey
The journey of the capturing ship to a capture.

Forced journey interrupted by capture
Some ships were recaptured on their forced journey. Each forced journey interrupted starts and ends with a capture.

Journey
General journeys refer to all movements of ships not immediately leading up to or right after a capture. Captured and capturing ships may be on „journeys“.
Court processes
Accessing via “Court process” takes you to an overview of all court processes available in the portal at time of access. You can pick any process which will take you to the information available on that process.

To filter the processes on display to your interest, you can use the following filter options…

Takes you to the virtual document of the record.

Takes you to the catalogue entry in TNA’s catalogue.
Court processes can be filtered by a categorization system of decisions ("verdict").

A court process may have come to different decisions regarding either the captured ship or entity or cargo taken from board. All decisions are recorded in the data set.

At times, courts would postpone a decision and ask for further proof – that will also be recorded in the data.

In some cases decisions may not be available as they were not recorded by the court or have not yet been found in the records.
Accessing via “Document type” takes you to the overview of all document types identified by the time of access. For each document type a definition and a sample document is presented. Further, the number of available documents of that type is shown.

Since the ß-version of the portal presents the collection of HCA 45, available document types are limited to this specific part of the collection.
Accessing via “Subject” takes you to an overview of topics suggested for further interest.

Documents with particular interest for specific research questions are tagged accordingly in the process of cataloguing.

To display the documents subsumed under the suggested subjects, view “hits” available.
Materiality
The Prize Papers Project fosters a particular interest in the special condition of the collection’s state of preservation.

Learn more about the project’s approach on materiality – and enjoy the virtual exhibition as well as many videos on working with the documents.

In future versions of the portal, the material features of documents will be available for further research through this access to the collection.
Appeals
Accessing via “Appeals” takes you to the bound volumes of HCA 45.

Choose one volume and browse the court cases collected therein.
“Search” takes you to the open search within the database, allowing you to filter by any type previously explained.

General remark:
Additionally to the suggested filters, the free search field is open to be used with free text. This is particularly helpful if you were looking for a person you are interested in – or a reference number.
General remark:
Searching for words will produce search results that contain one or more of the words anywhere – in the titles of the data sets or in the data itself. The later will only be visible when the data set is put on display.
General remark:
To search for reference numbers use quotation marks.
Dates and places – general remarks

Where dates and places are not known for certain, they are approximated by studying the documents.

To show the routes of ships, journeys have to be recorded in time sequences. This leads to the following rules for dates of journeys:

**Journey:**
For journeys not directly linking to a capture, start and end dates are not known in most cases of HCA 45. They are therefore set to year (and month) as assumed based on the examination of documents.

**Journey interrupted by capture and Capture journey:**
Generally the date of capture is known. It is the end date of that part of a ship’s journey. The date of the ship’s departure is not known in most cases of HCA 45. It is therefore either set to the year of capture, or assumed based on the examination of documents.

**Forced journey:**
The start date of this journey equals the date of the capture. The date of arrival at any port of destination is not known in most cases of HCA 45. It is therefore either set to the end of the year of capture, or assumed based on the examination of documents.

**Places (of capture):**
The exact place of a capture is rarely known. In many cases the documents provide a general (oceanic) region, where a ship was captured. For cases without any indication, the region is deduced from the route a ship was taking.