

Abstracted from The Mary Rose Trust Code of Practice

They (the Mary Rose Trust - MRT) are responsible for the care, documentation, interpretation, display and publication of the ship and its contents.

### **The Ship**

The hull of the *Mary Rose* is Britain's, and the world's, only 16th century ship on display to the public. The largest recovered archaeological find in Britain, it stands as high as a four-storey building, and weighs some 300 tons. During the underwater excavation, more than 3,000 additional timbers were recovered from the site and brought ashore for study and conservation. The most important group are the 800 timbers found in situ; the deck planks, beams, knees, stanchions, partition and compartment planks and supports.

### **Its contents**

Ordnance and weaponry: Heavy cast bronze muzzle loading guns and breech loading wrought iron guns with their carriages, and smaller breech loading swivel guns. Ammunition of stone, iron, lead and composite lead-covered iron shot. Gun furniture including a gunner's rule, shot gauges, powder scoops, powder flasks, rams, priming wires, tampions and linstocks. Archery equipment including longbows, arrows, arrow spacers and wristguards. Edged weapons in the form of kidney daggers and swords. Staff weapons in the form of bills and pikes.

Clothing: A fine assemblage of leather shoes, boots and jerkins, and fragments of knitted and worsted garments.

Personal possessions: Combs, razors, a 'piss pot' and pomander; pewterware, wooden bowls, dishes, plates, spoons and tankards; recreational games, a fine inlaid backgammon board with counters and bone dice; several handheld sundials, book covers, quill pens and an inkpot.

Coinage: Comprising 27 gold coins, numerous silver coins and copper tokens.

Musical instruments: Wind, including pipes and a fine shawm, string and percussion.

The occupational element: The medicine; including lidded canisters containing ointments, urethral syringes, a puncture syringe, a trepan and feeding bottle. Navigational instruments; including dividers, three gimbaled steering compasses, plotting board and log reel. Tools belonging to the ship's carpenter; rulers, planes, braces and mallets. The types of containers utilised for the stowage of provisions, supplies, tools, and personal possessions. Utensils used in the preparation of food, including the cooking cauldrons, a pair of bellows for tending the fire, and barrels of provisions.

The human element: The skeletal evidence for the crew themselves. There are few collections of sixteenth century comparative human bone material in the world, and none as well preserved as this group.

The environmental evidence: Insect remains, the bones of an immature rat and a small dog were found. Provisions in the form of butchered meat and fish bones, plum stones and peppercorns. Seeds including agrimony and straws and grasses.

They are also responsible for the acquisition, documentation, custody and display of a **limited collection** of material (e.g. contemporary photographs taken by those serving on the 20th century *Mary Roses*) relating to the *Mary Rose* (1556), *Mary Rose* (1623), *Mary Rose* (1649-54), *Mary Rose* (1660), *Mary Rose* (1915), *Mary Rose* (1943), objects (e.g. ordnance and weaponry) recovered during excavation work undertaken by the Deane brothers in the nineteenth century and memorabilia (e.g. commemorative souvenirs, such as the book known as 'The Loss of the *Mary Rose*' bound in wood recovered from the wreck site, certificates of authenticity issued subsequent to the Deane excavations, and media reports) relating to the excavation and recovery of the ship and its contents in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

However, the MRT will accept such material only if it is relevant in content and format (e.g. it would hardly be appropriate to acquire a collection of valuable contemporary documents for exhibition. Such a collection should be in the national archive.). Moreover, in the case of other ships known as the *Mary Rose*, where the interest of the MRT is in the passing on of the name, such material will be further limited. In these instances such material will be sufficient merely to acknowledge their existence (e.g. a single rigging block), not to form extensive core collections. Where the material would be valid held within another institution then acquisition would not be considered and a photographic reference or loan would be sought.

The MRT fully recognises the validity and importance of collaborative loans between itself and fellow organisations as a viable alternative to collecting. Current loans in include two bronze guns from the *Mary Rose*, recovered by the Deane brothers during the nineteenth century, from the Royal Artillery Institution, and a sixteenth century matchlock musket from the Royal Armouries for comparative display purposes. Current loans out include domestic and personal and ordnance material to Snibston Discovery Park, a longbow and arrow to the Manchester Museum and a replica gun carriage to the Royal Armouries.

For the foreseeable future, until the conservation of the hull and its contents is completed, the MRT does not intend to undertake further excavation on the site of the *Mary Rose*. However, if, during the course of the annual monitoring of the site, material is found eroded from the seabed, which would be damaged or destroyed by its continued exposure, then such material would be recovered and accessioned into the collection.

In respect of the collections, this document sets out the following responsibilities, which will be undertaken in observance of all relevant domestic and foreign laws, regulations and guidelines both statutory (UK, EU and International) and professional (Re:Source, Museum Association and Museum Documentation Association).

## 9.0 Acquisition of Material from other Individuals, Institutions or Organisations.

The MRT will, from time to time, acquire material, as detailed on page 2 (above), from individuals, institutions and organisations (the depositor) by bequest, gift or purchase.

It will however acquire only material, other than finds from the site of the wreck of the *Mary Rose*, which is fully documented and where it can be reasonably supposed that subsequent research will establish its value in the MRT collection. Material may be acquired which has little value or rarity in itself but may derive value from its association with the *Mary Rose*. Therefore:

### 9.1 When acquiring the MRT will only accept material

- 9.1.1 which has, in the first instance, been offered in writing to the MRT (under no circumstances should material be acquired on a first hand basis),
- 9.1.2 in observance of all relevant domestic and foreign laws, regulations and guidelines both statutory and professional,
- 9.1.3 in awareness of the collecting policies of other museums, and, where appropriate, in consultation with them,
- 9.1.4 that is in a condition that the MRT can accept responsibility for its care with confidence,
- 9.1.5 where the MRT is confident that the depositor holds a valid title to the material, and where the MRT is assured that the material has been acquired in observance of all relevant domestic and foreign laws and regulations,
  - 9.1.5.1 The MRT will not acquire, whether by bequest, gift or purchase, any object or specimen unless the MRT is satisfied that it can acquire a valid title to the item in question, and that in particular it has not been acquired in, or exported from, its country of origin (or any intermediate country in which it may have been legally owned) in violation of that country's laws. (For the purposes of this paragraph 'country of origin' includes the United Kingdom).
  - 9.1.5.2 So far as biological and geological material is concerned, the MRT will not acquire, by any direct or indirect means, any specimen in contravention of any national or international wildlife protection or natural history conservation law or treaty of the United Kingdom or any other country, except with the express consent of an appropriate outside authority.

9.1.6 where the removal of the material has not caused damage to an archaeological site or an excavation archive, whether that site is protected by law or not,

9.1.6.1 So far as British or foreign archaeological antiquities (including excavated ceramics) are concerned, in addition to subparagraph 9.1.5.1 above, the MRT will not acquire objects in any case where the MRT has reasonable cause to believe that the circumstances of their recovery involved the recent unscientific or intentional destruction or damage of ancient monuments or other known archaeological sites, or involved a failure to disclose the finds to the owner or occupier of the land, or to the proper authorities in the case of a possible Treasure Trove (England, Wales and Northern Ireland) or Bona Vacantia (Scotland).

9.1.7 where the valuation provided by the depositor represents a fair reflection of the current market value,

9.1.8 when the MRT can provide the necessary expertise for handling the material,

9.1.9 when the MRT can provide satisfactory environmental conditions for the display or storage of the material,

9.1.10 when the MRT can provide satisfactory physical conditions for the display or storage of the material,

9.1.11 that is of a quality commensurate with the standards of the MRT.

9.2 The MRT will proceed with the acquisition in accordance with the established procedures and will

9.2.1 record the acquisition in a written agreement signed by both parties. The acquisition form (Transfer of Title) will be completed by the responsible officer and entered in the central archive. It will be signed by the responsible officer on behalf of the MRT,

9.2.2 fully protect the interests of the depositor and MRT and either give credit to the depositor or preserve their anonymity if so requested.

9.3 Acquisitions outside the current stated policy will only be made in very exceptional circumstances, and then

9.3.1 only after proper consideration by the governing body of the MRT itself, having regard to interests of other museums.