



Brooklyn Navy Yard Development Corporation Archives  
Guide to the Brooklyn Navy Yard Paychecks collection  
1843-1861  
SC/11

Brooklyn Navy Yard Development Corporation Archives  
Building 77  
141 Flushing Avenue, Suite 801  
Brooklyn, NY 11205  
718-907-5982  
<https://brooklynnavyyard.org/about/archives>  
[archives@bnydc.org](mailto:archives@bnydc.org)

Finding aid produced on: 2019-08-28  
Description is in English.

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## Descriptive Summary

**Title:** Brooklyn Navy Yard Paychecks collection

**Creator:** N/A

**Date(s):** 1843-1861

**Quantity:** 1 box

**Language of Materials:** English

**Call Number:** SC/11

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## Administrative/Biographical History

The Brooklyn Navy Yard, previously known as the New York Navy Yard and later the New York Naval Shipyard, has its origins in the federal government's purchase of the land adjacent to Wallabout Bay for \$40,000 in 1801. Over the course of its history, more than 230 naval warships and auxiliary vessels were built at the Yard. Additionally, during World War II alone, more than 5,000 ships were repaired, overhauled, or converted. The first ship built was the USS Ohio, launched in 1817, while the last Navy ship launched was the USS Duluth (LPD-6) in 1965. Other historic vessels constructed at the Yard include USS Brooklyn, the USS Arizona, and the USS Missouri, the latter two of which bookended World War II.

In 1824, the Navy purchased an additional 25 acres near the Yard, on which it established the Brooklyn Naval Hospital. The main hospital building was completed in 1838. By 1850, the hospital annex was a walled-in, self-contained parcel of land with a gatehouse, a laboratory, and a cemetery. In 1864, a surgeon's residence was built. When the shipyard expanded during World War II, it took over the land of the former

Wallabout Market, located between the Yard and the annex, and the physical separation between the Yard and the Hospital was eliminated.

During the Civil War, the Yard employed about 6,000 people, and by 1938 it provided jobs for over 10,000. At the height of World War II, nearly 70,000 people were employed at the Yard, and it had grown to encompass 291 acres with 270 major buildings, 24 miles of railroad tracks, 23,278 linear feet of crane tracks, 18 miles of paved roads, 16,495 feet of berthing space, 9 piers, 6 dry docks, and 22 shops housing 98 different trades.

In 1966, the Navy decommissioned the Yard, and a year later most of the property was sold to the City of New York. While the Yard lost its naval shipbuilding presence, it retained residual administrative support functions as part of Naval Station New York, which occupied the former hospital annex and some adjacent buildings until it too was closed in 1989. The City eventually acquired the former naval station annex and the row of admiral's quarters at the south western tip of the site, taking full control over the 300-acre property by 2012.

The City delegated the Yard for private commercial use. It was first administered by the Commerce Labor and Industry Corporation of Kings (CLICK), then by the Brooklyn Navy Yard Development Corporation (BNYDC), a private, non-profit development corporation that manages and develops the Yard on behalf of the City with the aim of growing and maintaining an industrial manufacturing base in Brooklyn.

From 1969 to 1979, Seatrain Shipbuilding was the main tenant under CLICK. During its operation, the company produced four Very Large Crude Carriers (VLCCs), eight barges, one icebreaker barge, and two roll-on/roll-off ferries. Another important early tenant was Coastal Dry Dock & Repair Corporation, which leased space in the Yard between 1971 and 1987.

In the 1980s, BNYDC began a long-term effort to diversify the tenant base at the Yard, and by 2001 nearly 275 companies employing over 6,000 people were in residence. BNYDC undertook sustainability initiatives to support a rapidly growing cluster of green manufacturers, and large spaces were updated to accommodate small industrial enterprises that reflected the diversity, energy, and creativity of the community. BNYDC's Employment Center expanded, a Summer Youth Program was established, and a shuttle service to the subway is launched to provide better access and encourage the use of mass transit. The City took note of BNYDC's success and funded major upgrades to the Yard's basic infrastructure, some of which dated to the Civil War era. The Yard's largest expansion since WWII was underway.

The Yard is now home to over 400 businesses employing more than 7,000 people and generating over \$2 billion per year in economic impact for the City. With the openings of Building 77 and Dock 72, redevelopment of Admirals Row, expansion of Steiner Studios, and other projects, employment at the Yard will more than double in the next few years, jumping from 7,000 to 17,000+ by 2020. Building on the Yard's history as the economic heart of Brooklyn, the 300-acre waterfront asset offers a critical pathway to the middle class for many New Yorkers.

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## **Scope and Content**

This collection contains hand-written checks that were presumably collected in BLDG 121, the Paymaster building, by Yard employees. Checks were received by US Navy Pursers. Some checks bear the recipient's name, and some checks have stubs attached. All checks indicate they are for the "US Navy Yard-New York" and include dates and amounts. There are also checks from Todd Shipyards Corporation, a private shipyard on the Brooklyn waterfront in Red Hook.

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## Related Materials

**Location of Copies:** Items in this collection may have been digitized and if so, are featured in [BNY Collections](#), the BNYDC Archives' digital library. Only those items that have digital reproductions contain an Object ID listed in the Container List below. Use the Object ID or title of the item when searching BNY Collections.

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## System of Arrangement

This collection is arranged at the item level chronologically.

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## Access Points

New York Naval Shipyard  
Administrative  
Payrolls  
Todd Shipyards Corporation  
United States. Navy  
United States Navy Purser  
Wages

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## Administrative Information

**Accession Number(s):** N/A

**Acquisition Notes:** It is believed this collection was donated by Dwight Demeritt in 2008.

**Processing Notes:** It is believed this collection was processed by Meredith Wisner in 2008.

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## Access and Use

**Access Restrictions:** This collection is open for research.

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**Preferred Citation:** Published citations should take the following form: Identification of item, date (if known); Brooklyn Navy Yard Paychecks collection; SC/11; Brooklyn Navy Yard Development Corporation Archives, Brooklyn, NY.

**Related Material at the BNYDC Archives:** N/A

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## Container List

Box 1 (4-D-4-14)	Title	Date	Object ID
	Checks	1843-1861	