

# Basic Detail Report

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## ANMS1106

### Title

Collection of colour slides of ships and shipping activity

### Date

1950s - 1964

### Primary Maker

Herbert Recknell

### Name

Archive series

### History

This collection of 22 slides of ships and shipping related views was taken by Herbert Recknell, General Manager of Morts Docks in Balmain during the 1950s and early 1960s. Herbert's daughter Margaret Erickson notes that her father had a keen interest in ships and the movement of ships in Sydney Harbour. Mort's Dock & Engineering Co. Ltd was

one of the two most important ship building and repair operations in Sydney for almost a century. Mort's Dock at Waterview Bay Balmain was established in 1854 by Thomas Sutcliffe Mort. The dock was enlarged and the company, was formed in 1872. In 1899 Morts had a new graving dock excavated at Woolwich. By 1917 the company employed 1500 people and occupied 18 acres. It had a 640 foot dry dock, three patent slipways and two floating docks in Johnstone's Bay, Balmain. In 1924 it bought Chapman's Slipway, renamed Chapman's Branch, and in 1925 bought Rowntree's Floating Dock. Well known Sydney pilot boats, the CAPTAIN COOK I, II, and III were built at Mort's , as well as numerous ferries. During World War II the yards at Chapman's, Woolwich and Mort's were fully occupied in servicing merchant ships and in the conversion of ships for war purposes. A series of corvettes were built for the Royal Australian Navy. Mort's languished in subsequent years, was weakened by poor labour relations, and was wound up in 1959.