

Primary Source: Darwin's Cabin aboard *The Beagle* and *The Challenger*



Introduction

Maritime science developed significantly over the course of the 19th century. Below are two sets of materials. The first set provide blueprints, plans, and key facts about Charles Darwin's voyage aboard the HMS *Beagle* (1831–1836), which represents a crucial moment in the evolution of maritime science.

The second set provides a comparison to the HMS *Challenger*, a warship refitted to become a “floating laboratory” for a British expedition conducted between 1872 and 1876 that surveyed oceanic depths. As you review these sources, consider how individual naturalists like Darwin might have overcome some the practical limitations of working in these conditions, what changes to ship outfitting occur between these two voyages, and why the evolution to “floating laboratories” described in the lesson reading became necessary.

Primary Source

Introduction

Primary Source Set
1: Darwin's Cabin
and *The Beagle*

Primary Source Set
2: The HMS *Challenger*

Primary Source Set 1: Darwin's Cabin and *The Beagle*

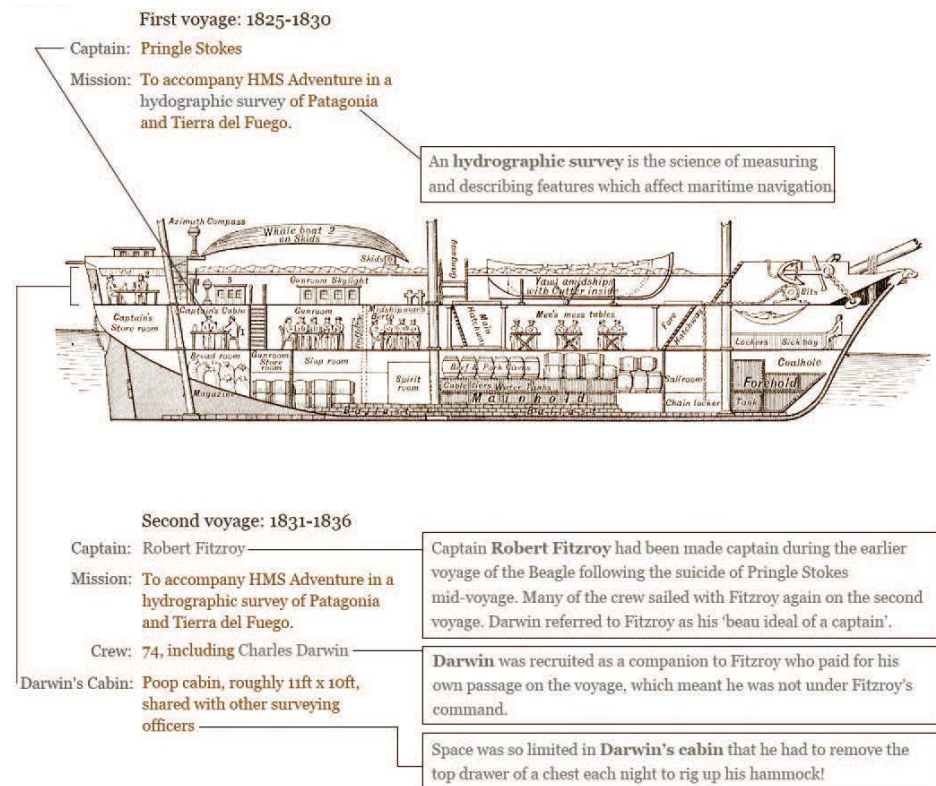
Source: "The Beagle Voyage," Darwin Correspondence Project, Cambridge University Library CC BY-ND 2.00, https://www.darwinproject.ac.uk/sites/default/files/learning_resources/The%20Beagle%20Voyage%20Activity%201.pdf

HMS Beagle Quick Facts:

- Ship size: HMS Beagle was 90 feet long, 24.5 feet wide
- Crew: 74 people
- Darwin's cabin: approximately 11 x 10 ft
- Voyage duration: 5 years (1831-1836)
- Primary Mission: Naval surveying (Darwin was a passenger, his work was not the primary purpose of the voyage)

HMS Beagle Blueprints:

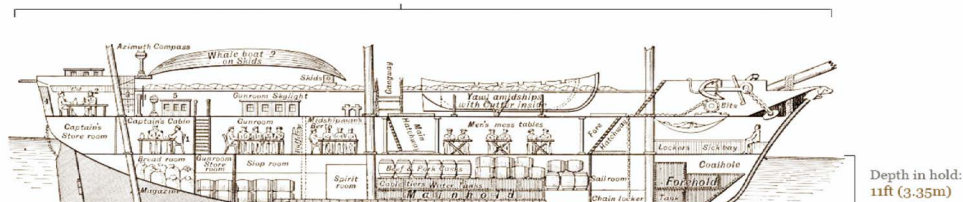
Voyages of the Beagle



Specifications of the Beagle

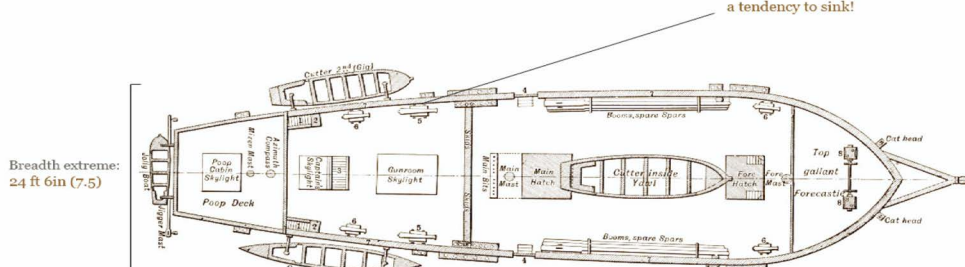
Specifications

Length: 90 ft long (27m)
 Tonnage: 235
 Cost: £7,803
 Launched: 11 May 1820

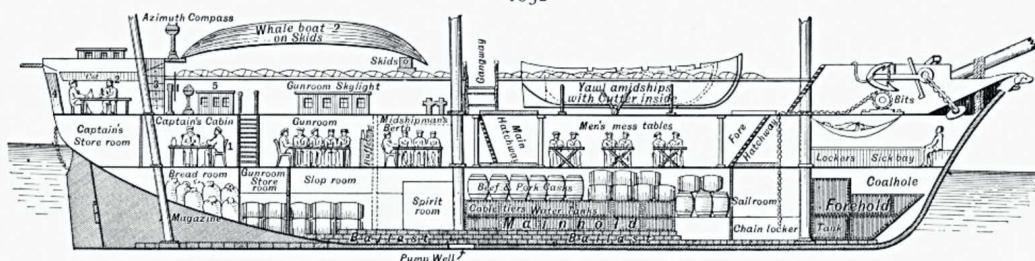


Armament: 10 guns, reduced to 6 for survey voyages.

10 gun brig/ brig sloop: 10 gun brigs were often referred to as 'coffin brigs' as they were not easy to manoeuvre and had a tendency to sink!

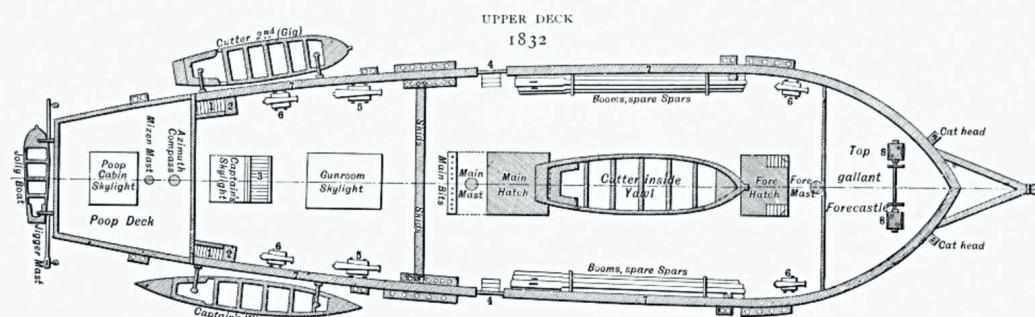


H.M.S. BEAGLE
 MIDDLE SECTION FORE AND AFT
 1832



1. Mr. Darwin's Seat in Captain's Cabin
2. Mr. Darwin's Seat in Poop Cabin with Cot slung behind him
3. Mr. Darwin's Chest of Drawers
4. Bookcase
5. Captain's Skylight

UPPER DECK
 1832



1. Poop Ladders
2. Signal Flag Lockers
3. After Companion
4. Gangways
5. Brass nine pounders, Captain's private property
6. Six pounders
7. Hammock Nettings
8. Patent Windlass

Poop Cabin

Chest of Drawers

Wardrobe

Table

Seat

Bath Case

Door

Window

Scale of Feet

Author

Primary Source Set 2: The HMS Challenger

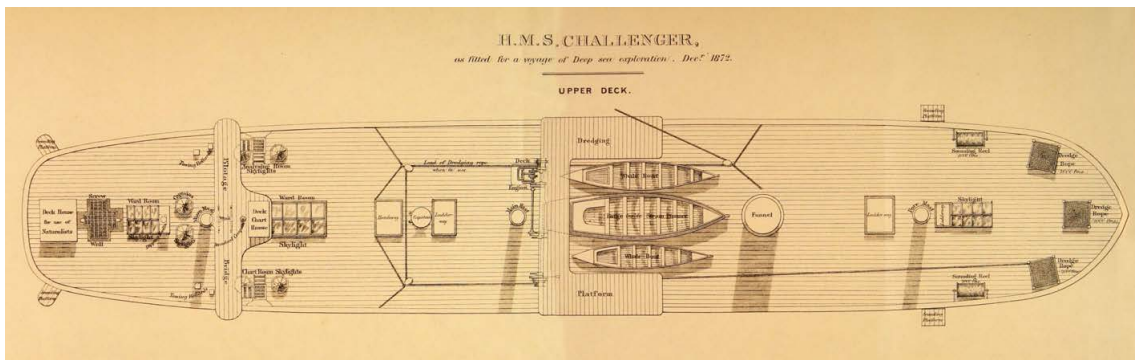
Source: "Plans of H.M.S. Challenger, As Fitted for a Voyage of Deep-Sea Exploration," 19th Century Science, <https://www.19thcenturyscience.org/HMSC/HMSC-INDEX/Deck-Plans.html>

HMS Challenger Quick Facts:

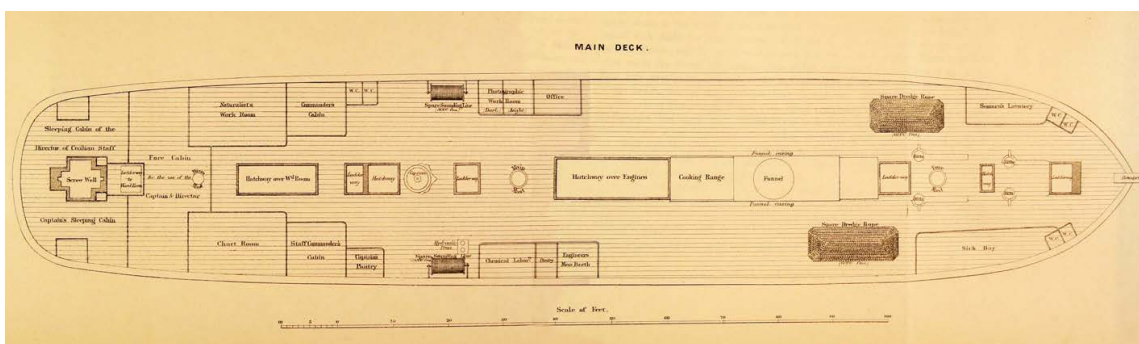
- Ship size: 200 feet long
- Crew: ~243 people
- Naturalist's space: Two 18 x 12 ft purpose-built workrooms
- Voyage duration: 4 years (1872–1876)
- Mission: Global oceanic surveying and scientific research (commissioned by Royal Society)

HMS Challenger Upper Deck and Main Deck

Upper Deck

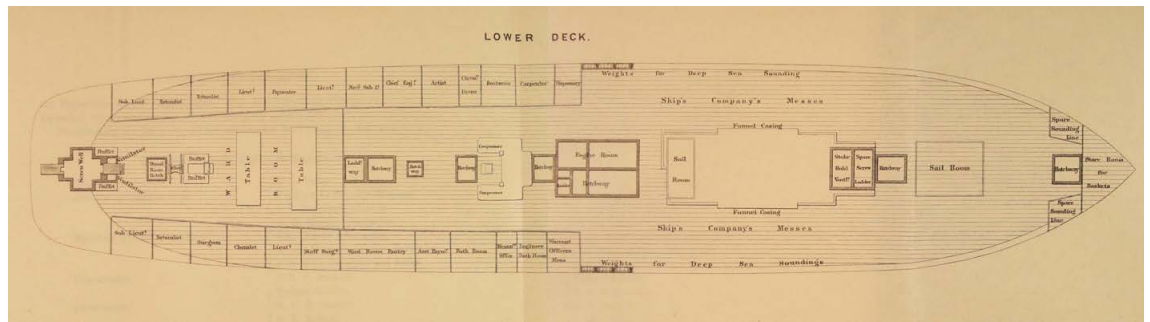


Main Deck



HMS Challenger Lower Deck and Hold

Lower Deck



Hold

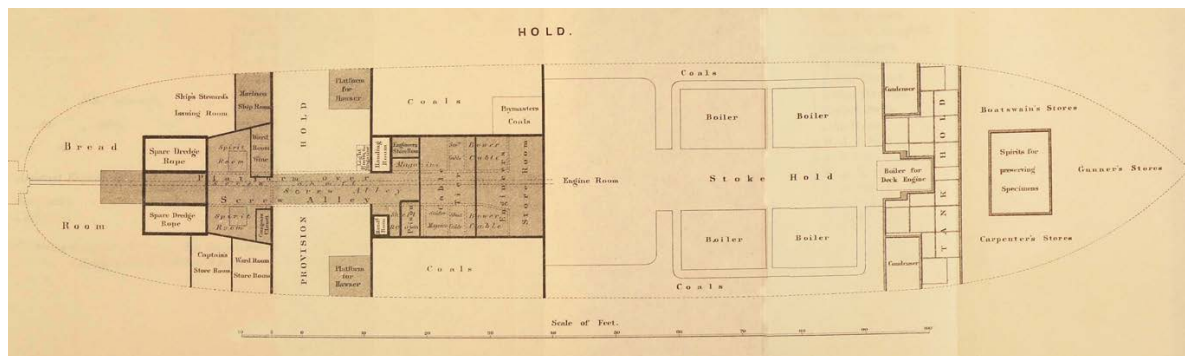


Image Citations

Page 1:

Owen Stanley, HMS Beagle, 1841, Public Domain, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:HMSBeagle.jpg>

Page 2:

“Voyage,” Darwin Correspondence Project, Cambridge University Library CC BY-ND 2.00, https://www.darwinproject.ac.uk/sites/default/files/learning_resources/The%20Beagle%20Voyage%20Activity%201.pdf

Page 3:

“Specifications,” Darwin Correspondence Project, Cambridge University Library CC BY-ND 2.00, https://www.darwinproject.ac.uk/sites/default/files/learning_resources/The%20Beagle%20Voyage%20Activity%201.pdf

“H.M.S. Beagle Middle Section Fore and Aft, 1832,” Darwin Correspondence Project, Cambridge University Library CC BY-ND 2.00, https://www.darwinproject.ac.uk/sites/default/files/learning_resources/The%20Beagle%20Voyage%20Activity%201.pdf

Page 4:

“PG King’s Plan of Darwin’s Cabin,” Darwin Correspondence Project, Cambridge University Library CC BY-ND 2.00, https://www.darwinproject.ac.uk/sites/default/files/learning_resources/The%20Beagle%20Voyage%20Activity%201.pdf

Page 5:

“H.M.S. Challenger Upper Deck,” III. Plans of the H.M.S Challenger, As Fitted for a Voyage of Deep-Sea Exploration., <https://www.19thcenturyscience.org/HMSC/HMSC-INDEX/Deck-Plans.html>

“Main Deck,” III. Plans of the H.M.S Challenger, As Fitted for a Voyage of Deep-Sea Exploration., <https://www.19thcenturyscience.org/HMSC/HMSC-INDEX/Deck-Plans.html>

Page 6:

“Lower Deck,” III. Plans of the H.M.S Challenger, As Fitted for a Voyage of Deep-Sea Exploration., <https://www.19thcenturyscience.org/HMSC/HMSC-INDEX/Deck-Plans.html>

“Hold,” III. Plans of the H.M.S Challenger, As Fitted for a Voyage of Deep-Sea Exploration., <https://www.19thcenturyscience.org/HMSC/HMSC-INDEX/Deck-Plans.html>