

Union Steamship Company collection [multiple media] / Vancouver Maritime Museum, Gerald Rushton, Arthur Twigg, Harold Cecil Biles and James Richard Southworth.

COLLECTION NUMBER

VMM04

DATE(S)

1898-2003

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION

76.7 cm of textual records and other materials.

ADMINISTRATIVE HISTORY / BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

The Union Steamship Company of British Columbia was originally formed in Vancouver on July 1, 1899 by Captain William Webster and John Darling, a former director and General Superintendent of the Union Steamship Company of New Zealand. After raising enough capital, the Union company was officially incorporated on November 16, 1899, when it absorbed the Burrard Inlet Towing Company of Vancouver. Initially, the company's primary function was to deliver cargo to remote communities along the British Columbia's coastline. In 1911, the J.H. Welsford and Company, a cargo line based out of Liverpool, England, purchased controlling interests in the Union company. Under this new management, the Union company entered the day excursion and resort business by offering passenger services and then building and operating several company-owned resorts on Bowen Island, the Sechelt Peninsula and at Whytecliff. For the next quarter of a century, the Union Steamship Co. continued to remain in British hands until 1937 when a group of Vancouver businessmen, represented by M. J. K. Allen and E. E. Buckerfield, eventually purchased back the British shares. Over the next 20 years, the company continued to expand its operations by acquiring the Frank Waterhouse Company of Canada in 1939 and the Sannie Ferry Company in 1944. Between 1946 to 1950, the Union company also operated a ferry service across Howe Sound under the name of the Howe Sound Ferry Co. Ltd. before the company eventually dissolved the service and merged the vessels with the Sannie operation at Horseshoe Bay. Despite its acquisition of the Tidewater Shipping Company in 1956, the Union company faced a number of economic setbacks that were brought on by declining business in long-haul passenger traffic and increased competition on main cargo routes throughout the 1950s. To recoup its losses, the company was eventually forced to sell its entire sailing fleet to its competitor, the Northland Navigation Company, in 1959.

The various cargo and passenger ships that were owned and operated by the Union Steamship Company over the past 70 years include:

- *Camosun I* (1905-1936)
- *Capilano I* (1891-1915)
- *Capilano II* (1920-1949)
- *Cardena* (1923-1959)
- *Cassiar I* (1901-1923)
- *Catala* (1925-1959)
- *Chasina* (1917-1923)
- *Cheakamus* (1913-1942)
- *Cheam* (1920-1923)
- *Chehalis* (1897-1906)
- *Chelohsin* (1911-1949)
- *Cheslakee* (1910-1913)
- *Chilco & Lady Pam* (1917-1935 as the *Chilco* before it was rebuilt with passenger accommodation and renamed as the *Lady Pam*, continuing in service from 1935-1946)
- *Chilliwack I* (1919-1926)
- *Chilliwack II* (1927-1954)
- *Chilkoot I* (1920-1934)
- *Clutch* (1890-1900)
- *Comox I* (1891-1919)
- *Comox II* (in service periodically between 1924-1943)
- *Coutli* (1904-1909)
- *Coquitlam I* (1892-1923)
- *Cowichan* (1908-1925)

- *Eastholm* (1939-1957)
- *Lady Alexandra* (1924-1953)
- *Lady Cecilia* (1925-1951)
- *Lady Cynthia* (1925-1957)
- *Lady Evelyn* (1923-1936)
- *Lady Rose* (1937-1951)
- *Leonora* (1889-1904)
- *Melmore* (1914-1916, but only operated in 1914)
- *Northholm* (1939-1943)
- *Senator* (1889-1904)
- *Skidegate* (1889-1897)
- *Southholm* (1939-1950)
- *Vadso* (1911-1914)
- *Venture* (1911-1946)
- *Washington* (1918 only)

SCOPE & CONTENT

The collection consists of a combination of materials relating to the Union Steamship Company of British Columbia that has been collected over the years by the Vancouver Maritime Museum as well as documents that have been donated to the museum by Gerald Rushton, author of two books on the company titled *Whistle Up the Inlet* and *Echoes of the Whistle*; Arthur Twigg, author of the book *Union Steamship Remembered*; Harold Cecil Biles, former employee; and James Richard Southworth, former Marine Constable. The collection includes financial reports, maps, schedule notes, special operating circulars, company memos, sailing guides, menus, brochures, research notes, correspondence, newspaper clippings, magazine articles, manuscripts, assorted ephemera, photographs and audio cassettes.

LANGUAGES

English

RELATED MATERIALS

Related records may be found in the Shipping Files Collection under the name of the individual ships and the Captain Edward Crawford Swank Fonds.

RELATED VESSELS

Camosun (I); *SS Capilano (I)*; *SS Cardena*; *Catala*; *Chehalis (I)*; *Cheslakee (I)*; *SS Coquitlam (I)*; *TSS Lady Alexandra*; *SS Lady Cynthia*; *Lady Evelyn*; *Camosun (II)*; *Coquitlam (II)*; *Lady Pam*; *MV Lady Rose (I)*; *SS Lady Cecilia*; *Northholm*; *SS Venture (IV)*; *Cowichan (II)*

Collection Contents

Union Steamship Company collection

Series 1: Administrative records

The series contains financial reports, notes about the company's history, a 1901 fire insurance map of Coal Harbour showing the site of Union Steamship, a 1924 map depicting the company's lease of Canadian Pacific Railway (C.P.R.) property in Vancouver, a 1952 map of the company's cargo and passenger routes, a copy of the company's lease agreement to rent warehouse space from the C.P.R., specification reports regarding ship and machinery construction, miscellaneous schedule notes, booklets containing information about freight and passenger tariffs, special operating circulars, newsletters, and memos including one that discussed the proposed evacuation of Japanese from B.C. Coast Ports and Points on Vancouver Island.

Administrative history & operations

Financial reports

Freight & passenger tariffs

Ship and engine construction

Miscellaneous schedule notes

Miscellaneous schedule notes

Special operating circulars & notes

Company memos & newsletters

Passenger fare tickets and receipt stubs for various Union Steamship routes

Series 2: General files

The series consists of research notes, newspaper clippings, articles, correspondence, certificates, private documents, publicity materials, menus, sailing guides, and ephemeral items such as unused company administrative forms, stationery and napkins.

Unused administrative forms, stationery & napkins

"All-Red Line" from Powell River

Bowen Island Estates

Companies – Buscovitz Steamship Co.

Companies – Frank Waterhouse & Co.

Companies – Gulf Lines Ltd.

Companies – Sannie Transportation

Companies – Terminal Steam Navigation Co.

Companies – Tidewater Shipping Co.

Employees – general information

Employees – marine constables

Employees – Harold Cecil Biles

File consists of personal records (some restricted) and business records of Cpt. Biles. This includes his master's certificate, merchant marine certificate, correspondence, notes, and other documents.

Employees – Captain John A. Boden

Employees – Captain Frederick Leslie Coe

Employees – (Baron) Frances L. Carter-Cotton

Employees – Captain Ernest Alfred Dickson

Employees – Captain James Findlay

Employees – Captain George F. Gaisford

Employees – Captain Andy Johnstone

Employees – Captain John L. Malcolmson

File consists of one photocopied newspaper clipping regarding Cpt. Malcolmson.

Employees – Captain Charles Moody

Employees – Captain Samuel Nelson

Employees – Alfred W. Newman

Employees – James Richard Southworth

Employees – Roderick Paul Thomas

Employees – Captain W. L. Yates

Menus

Miscellaneous certificates, correspondence, notes & reports

Miscellaneous museum correspondence

Proposed service between West Vancouver and Gibsons Landing

Publicity material

Sailing guides (1 record)

Special Christmas holiday reduced fares to Vancouver

Selma Park (Sechelt)

Series 3: Articles, clippings and scrapbooks

The series consists of magazine articles, newspaper clippings, promotional brochures, sailing schedules, invitations, Christmas cards and 4 photographs of the damage done to the TSS *Cardena* when the vessel collided with a tug boat. The newspaper clippings reveal information about the company's operations, marine accidents that the company was involved in, and the purchase and selling of various Union vessels.

Assorted articles

Correspondence regarding Marine Digest's story on the Union Steamship Co.

Norman Hacking's clippings

Assorted clippings

Scrapbook of clippings, brochures and invitations

Scrapbook of clippings

Scrapbook of clippings and photographs

Scrapbook of clippings

Scrapbook of promotional brochures & schedules

Series 4: Echoes of the Whistle book

The series consists of a typewritten manuscript of Gerald Rushton's book "Echoes of the Whistle", notes, drafts of the book's forward written by Leonard McCann, former curator and director of the Vancouver Maritime Museum and correspondence addressed to and written by both Rushton and McCann regarding the book's publication and promotion.

Manuscript of Gerald Rushton's "Echoes of the Whistle"

Correspondence & notes regarding "Echoes of the Whistle"

Series 5: Whistle Up the Inlet book

The series consists of handwritten manuscripts of Gerald Rushton's book "Whistle Up the Inlet", research notes, publicity materials, correspondence addressed to and written by Rushton and McCann regarding the book's publication and administrative notes regarding the "Whistle Up the Inlet" exhibition at the Vancouver Maritime Museum.

Gerald Rushton's manuscript and notes for "Whistle Up the Inlet" regarding the company's history

Chapters 1-2 of Gerald Rushton's manuscript of "Whistle Up the Inlet"

Chapters 3-5 of Gerald Rushton's manuscript of "Whistle Up the Inlet" [Duplicate]

Chapters 6-8 of Gerald Rushton's manuscript of "Whistle Up the Inlet"

Chapters 9-10 of Gerald Rushton's manuscript of "Whistle Up the Inlet"

Chapters 11-12 of Gerald Rushton's manuscript of "Whistle Up the Inlet"

Research notes for "Whistle Up the Inlet"

Book promotion

"Whistle Up the Inlet" exhibition at the Vancouver Maritime Museum

Incoming correspondence for Gerald Rushton regarding "Whistle Up the Inlet"

Correspondence and notes for Leonard McCann regarding "Whistle Up the Inlet" book

Series 6: Union Steamships Remembered book

The series consists of correspondence addressed to and written by Arthur Twigg, author of "Union Steamships Remembered", and Fred Rogers, a friend of Twigg. The correspondence not only relates to the research and publication of Twigg's book, but it also refers to an incident where a publisher gave Twigg's earlier manuscript to another writer for editing only to have the author claim credit for Twigg's work.

Arthur Twigg's correspondence relating to his book "Union Steamships Remembered"

Fred Rogers' correspondence relating to Arthur Twigg's book "Union Steamships Remembered"

Series 7: Photographs

Series consists of photographs and a negative depicting the company's various sailing vessels, office buildings and dock facilities, ports of call along the British Columbia coast, directors' group, office staff, captains, officers, individual company employees, resort properties, company and recreational excursions, and rival ferry companies. The series is divided into five sub-series: Operational, Personnel, Resorts, Other Ferries Companies and Miscellaneous.

Union Steamship Company operations photographs

Sub-series consists of images of the company operations.

Fleet – 1919-1939

File consists of images of the fleet of vessels that operated between 1919 and 1939.

Office buildings and docks – 1920-1958

File consists of images of the office buildings and docks of the company.

Ports of call

File consists of images of the ports of call for the Union Steamships.

Union Steamship Company personnel

Sub-series consists of images of the company employees.

Captains and officers

Construction, dock and ship employees

Directors' group

Office groups

Ernest Beazley

File consists of images of Ernest Beazley.

Captain Jack Boden

File consists of images of Jack Boden.

Harold Brown

File consists of images of Harold Brown.

Francis Lovet Carter-Cotton

File consists of one image of Francis Lovet Carter-Cotton.

Charles Colwell

File consists of one image of Charles Colwell.

Harold Compton

File consists of one image of Harold Compton.

Philip Cooke

File consists of one image of Philip Cooke.

James Crookall

File consists of one image of James Crookall.

Henry Darling

File consists of images of Henry Darling.

John Darling

File consists of one image of John Darling.

A. DeGruchy

File consists of one image of A. DeGruchy.

Captain Ernest Alfred Dickson

File consists of one image of Ernest Alfred Dickson.

Paddy Farina

File consists of one image of Paddy [Patrick?] Farina.

Gordon Farrell

File consists of one image of Gordon Farrell.

Captain George Gaisford

File consists of one image of George Gaisford.

Captain E. Georgeson

File consists of one image of E. Georgeson.

Lorne Godfrey

File consists of one image of Lorne Godfrey.

Captain John Halcrow

File consists of images of John Halcrow.

Colonel Alfred St. George Hammersley

File consists of images of Alfred St. George Hammersley.

Stan Hunter

File consists of one image of Stan Hunter.

Harry Ives and Gerry Foote

File consists of one image of both Harry Ives and Gerry Foote.

Kollegians (Band)

File consists of one image of the band named the Kollegians.

J. M. Larnie

File consists of one image of J. M. Larnie.

H. B. Lennard and Gerald Rushton

File consists of one image of both H. B. Lennard and Gerald Rushton.

Gerald McBean

File consists of images of Gerald McBean.

Captain William McCombe

File consists of images of William McCombe.

Captain Alec McLennan

File consists of one image of Alec McLennan.

Tom Melton

File consists of one image of Tom Melton.

Captain John Muir

File consists of images of John Muir.

Captain R. R. Naughty

File consists of images of R. R. Naughty. This could refer to Robert T. Naughty, or his son Robert Naughty.

Captain John Park

File consists of images of John Park.

Pat Pattison

File consists of one image of Pat Pattison.

Captain Ernest Powys

File consists of one image of Ernest Powys.

Gilbert Rennie

File consists of one image of Gilbert Rennie.

Captain Harry Roach

File consists of one image of Harry Roach.

Sir Arthur Rushton

File consists of one image of Arthur Rushton.

Gerald Rushton

File consists of images of Gerald Rushton.

Denis H. Shaw

File consists of one image of Denis H. Shaw.

Captain Ernest Sheppard

File consists of one image of Ernest Sheppard.

Fred Smith

File consists of one image of Fred Smith.

James Richard Southworth

File consists of images of James Richard Southworth.

Captain Fred Talbot

File consists of one image of Fred Talbot.

Captain Robert (Bob) Wilson

File consists of images of Robert Wilson.

Teddy Turff

File consists of one image of Teddy Turff.

Captain Alexander Walker

File consists of images of Alexander Walker.

James Hugh Welsford

File consists of one image of James Hugh Welsford.

Other ferry companies

Subseries consists of photographs of the other companies Union Steamships ran: Sannie Ferries and Howe Sound Ferries.

Howe Sound Ferries

File consists of photographs of the Howe Sound Ferries vessels and staff.

Sannie Ferries

File consist of images of the vessels and staff of the Sannie Ferry Company.

Miscellaneous photographs

Subseries consists of an assortment of photographs that could not be filed in other subseries.

Miscellaneous

File consists of miscellaneous photographs related to the Union Steamship Company.

Series 8: Audio-visual

The series consists of an audio cassette of whistle blow sounds from the SS *Catala* and SS *Coquitlam*. The 8mm film reels depict the vessel *Texada Q.* (*Texada Queen* (II)?) entering Quathiaski Cove on March 1976 and an unidentified docked ship.

Whistle sounds from the SS *Catala* and SS *Coquitlam*

File consists of one audio cassette tape containing 15 seconds of the *Catala* whistle blows (._ _ ... _ . _ . _). It also contains (at 1:15), the *Coquitlam*'s whistle.

***Texada Q.* entering Quathiaski Cover on March 1976**

File consists of two 8mm films documenting the *Texada Q.* (could be referring to the *Texada Queen* (II)) entering Quathiaski Cove, Quadra Island.