

Robert D. Graham HALCO Shipping Corporation Research Files
MSS # 223
3 linear feet

Background

Robert DeMont Graham was a 1961 graduate of St. Lawrence University. Born in Jersey City, NJ, his family relocated to Morristown, NY, on the St. Lawrence River, when “Bob” was a young boy. Freight ships, plying the river in the days before the St. Lawrence Seaway, were a constant sight. Bob spent his high school years at a military school near Syracuse, and in 1954 and 1955, spent two summers working aboard the Halco corporation freighter Eastcliffe Hall, sparking a lifelong interest in shipping, boating and the nautical sciences. Following a two-year military hitch after graduation from St. Lawrence, Bob and his wife Betty settled in the North Country, began teaching careers, and enjoyed life on the St. Lawrence. Bob wrote articles for numerous boating and shipping publications.

In 1976, thanks in part to an association with the Augsburg family, owners of Halco Corporation, Bob was engaged to write a 50th anniversary brochure for Halco. This successful project led to an invitation to write a longer, more comprehensive book about the shipping company. Over the course of the next several years, as research on the book progressed, the fortunes of Halco Corporation began a downward slide due to shipping accidents, economic pressures and other factors. Halco Corporation failed in the 1980s and Graham’s book project was shelved, but a desire to finish what he had started resulted in an unpublished manuscript, *HALCO: The Odyssey of a Canadian-American Enterprise*, also held by St. Lawrence University Libraries.

Mr. Graham passed away in March, 2021.

Scope and Content

The collection consists of photographs, notes, clippings, memorabilia, correspondence and research files associated with Robert Graham’s trips aboard various Halco Corporation vessels in the 1950s, 1970s and 1980s that are associated with his research and writing of the Halco book manuscript. Included are numerous photographs that were to illustrate the book; files of photographs of each of the Halco Corporation’s ships; government reports and supporting documentation for several accidents that damaged or destroyed a number of Halco vessels.

Files on another unpublished manuscript, *Elmer W. Jones: A Life of the Double-end Diesel Ferry and an Overview of the 20th Century Morristown, NY-Brockville, Ontario Ferry Service*, are also included, along with numerous articles written by Mr. Graham for various boating publications..

Provenance

Donated in November 2021 by Betty Graham.

Series 1—Hall Corporation (HALCO) research files

Box 1

HALCO: Voyages 1954-1987

- Deck logs for voyages 1954-55; 1977; 1978; 1979; 1980; 1982; 1983; 1984; 1986; 1987
- Photos, cards, notebook

SHIPS: Photos from *Eastcliffe Hall* trips 1954-55; John H. Price trip 1955

HALCO: Position Reports

HALCO: Miscellaneous

GOELETTES

- Photos and correspondence related to a program to be given in 2015

HALCO: General Information

- Comb bound vessel traffic procedures manual
- HALCO Lecture/Presentation notes
- Invitations, agendas for various HALCO events, meetings
- Organizational charts
- Magazine advertisements
- TIME magazine article

HALCO Memorabilia

- Greeting cards; booklets, desk calendar, small flags

Box 2

HALCO: Correspondence received 1976-1988

- Letters to Robert Graham from various HALCO personnel concerning various voyages aboard company vessels, research questions, etc.

WRITINGS “50” (50th Anniversary HALCO booklet-1977)

- Correspondence related specifically to this publication
- Mock-up of the booklet
- Published booklet: *50: Hall Corporation Shipping Limited 1927-1977*

Photographs and other material on first Hall Corporation Ships

AD MacTeir-Copy of Canadian report on 1926 stranding of the ship in Gaspé,
P.Q.

HALCO: John H. Price (includes hand-written note by R. Graham)

HALCO: Mont Louis- Photos and info on grounding in 1927 in St. Lawrence

HALCO: Walter B. Reynolds

Photographs and other material on HALCO ships with “Cliffe” nomenclature

| | | |
|-------------------|------------------|-------------------|
| Westcliffe Hall | Rockcliffe Hall | Eaglescliffe Hall |
| Consiccliffe Hall | Meadecliffe Hall | Frankcliffe Hall |
| Beavercliffe Hall | Hutchcliffe Hall | Northcliffe Hall |
| Southcliffe Hall | Sterncliffe Hall | Maplecliffe Hall |
| Ottercliffe Hall | Steelcliffe Hall | |

Photos and other material on other Hall Corporation Ships

| | | |
|--------------------|--------------------|----------------------|
| George L. Eaton | Lucius W. Robinson | F. P. Jones |
| Fred Mercur | John Rugee | Coalfax |
| Orefax | Hallfax | James Transport |
| Chemical Transport | Cape Transport | Industrial Transport |
| Island Transport | River Transport | Lake Transport |
| Ungava Transport | Doan Transport | |

Box 3

Photos and documentation for HALCO ships involved in accidents

Aylcliffe Hall

- Collision with another ship in June 1936—No fatalities

Leecliffe Hall

- Collided with another ship September 1964—Three crew members lost

Lawrencecliffe Hall

- Collided with another ship, November 1965—No lives lost. Was later refloated and repaired
- Extensive documentation/photos on the accident

Eastcliffe Hall

- Collided with a concrete base near Chrysler Shoal in July 1970. Six crew and three family members lost
- File includes newspaper clippings, Court of Investigation report, blueprints, photos

Box 4

Catiercliffe Hall

- Experienced a fire on board in crew quarters June 1979 on Lake Superior. 7 crew members died in the fire or of injuries
- File includes photos of ship, Report of formal investigation by Transport Canada and report of judgement dated 1980

Hudson Transport

- Experienced a fire aboard on Christmas Day 1981 in crew accommodation area. Seven crew members were killed by drowning when their inflatable life boat did not hold air.
- File contains a formal report into the fire and aftermath by Transport Canada

Additional HALCO files

HALCO: Photos for Company History manuscript

HALCO: Illustrations for Book

- Both files contain numerous photos and other illustrations, many with captions, that were to be incorporated into *HALCO: The Odyssey of a Canadian-American Enterprise*

HALCO: Post Cliffe newsletter 1979-1986 (published in both English and French)

Box 5

Scrapbook of newspaper articles (mostly ca. 1950s) concerning shipping, the St. Lawrence Seaway and prominent shipping accidents involving Hall Corporation vessels.

Box 6

Series 2—Elmer W. Jones Morristown-Brockville (Ont.) Ferry files

ELMER W. JONES

- File contains photos, clippings and published articles, including
 - –Morristown Ferries, by Richard Johnson II, *SLCHA Quarterly* Volume LVII No. 1 2012
 - –Elmer W. Jones: A life of the Double End International Ferry... From *The Scanner, Monthly News Bulletin of the Toronto Marine Historical Society* vol. XLIII, No.3, December 2010

Series 3—Other Writings

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|--|---|
| On the Eastcliffe 1954-1955 (1970) | VCNV: Reminiscences of the Eastcliffe Hall (1971) |
| Writings on the France (1974-1980) | Hurt but not Slain (John H. Price-1979) |
| Book Reviews for <i>Steamboat Bill</i> (1983) | Halco Historical Parody (not dated) |
| Canallers and Currents (1978) | H to the 50 th Power (1978) |
| Ship of the Month: <i>Eastcliffe Hall</i> (1996) | Ship of the Month: <i>John H. Price</i> (1995) |
| Lakespeak (Inland Seas, 1984) | Benny and the Boom (Telescope 1981) |

See Also:

HALCO: The Odyssey of a Canadian-American Marine Enterprise, by Robert Graham

<https://libcat.stlawu.edu/search~S3?/aGraham%2C+Robert/agraham+robert/1%2C6%2C17%2CB/frameset&FF=agraham+robert&3%2C%2C10>

Elmer W. Jones: A Life of the Double-end Diesel Ferry and an Overview of the 20th Century Morristown, NY-Brockville, Ontario Ferry Service, by Robert Graham

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