A guide to the Matson Navigation Company book of data sheets, undated

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Abstract: The Matson Navigation Company book of data sheets (SAFR 23833, HDC 1670) consists of 85 blueprint pages of specifications for Matson-owned vessels. The collection has been processed to the item unit level and is open for use without restrictions.
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Historical or Biographical Note
Matson Navigation Company was founded in 1882 and is still active today. It is one of the most important American shipping companies active in the Pacific, and is particularly important for its role in the development of Hawaiian trade with the mainland United States. Matson Navigation Company was and continues to be an innovator in shipping technology and services. Matson is also fondly remembered for its luxury cruises in the Pacific and for its role in the development of Hawaiian tourism from the 1920s through the 1970s. Matson Navigation Company's long association with Hawaii began in 1882, when Captain William Matson sailed his three-masted schooner EMMA CLAUDINA from San Francisco to Hilo, Hawaii, carrying 300 tons of food, plantation supplies and general merchandise. That voyage launched a company that has been involved in such diversified interests as oil exploration, hotels and tourism, military service during two world wars and even briefly, the airline business. Matson's primary interest throughout, however, has been carrying freight between the Pacific Coast and Hawaii.
In 1887, Captain Matson sold the EMMA CLAUDINA and acquired the brigantine LURLINE, which more than doubled the former vessel’s carrying capacity. As the Matson fleet expanded, new vessels introduced some dramatic maritime innovations. The bark RHODERICK DHU was the first ship to have a cold storage plant and electric lights. The first Matson steamship, the ENTERPRISE, was the first offshore ship in the Pacific to burn oil instead of coal.

Increased commerce brought a corresponding interest in Hawaii as a tourist attraction. The second LURLINE, with accommodations for 51 passengers, joined the fleet in 1908. The 146-passenger ship WILHELMINA followed in 1910, rivaling the finest passenger ships serving the Atlantic routes. More steamships continued to join the fleet. When Captain Matson died in 1917 at 67, the Matson fleet comprised 14 of the largest, fastest and most modern ships in the Pacific passenger-freight service. When World War I broke out, most of the Matson fleet was requisitioned by the government as troopships and military cargo carriers. Other Matson vessels continued to serve Hawaii’s needs throughout the war. After the war, Matson ships reverted to civilian duty and the steamers MANULANI and MANUKAI were added to the fleet - the largest freighters in the Pacific at that time.

The decade from the mid-20s to mid-30s marked a significant period of Matson expansion. In 1925, the Company established Matson Terminals, Inc., a wholly owned subsidiary, to perform stevedoring and terminal services for its fleet. With increasing passenger traffic to Hawaii, Matson added the S.S. MALOLO in 1927. The Malolo was the fastest ship in the Pacific, cruising at 22 knots. Its success led to the construction of the liners MARIPOSA, MONTEREY and LURLINE (3) between 1930 and 1932.

Immediately after the December 7, 1941 attack on Pearl Harbor, the passenger liners LURLINE, MATSONIA, MARIPOSA and MONTEREY, and 33 Matson freighters were called to military service. The four passenger liners completed a wartime total of 119 voyages, covered 1 1/2 million miles and carried a total of 736,000 troops. The post-war period for Matson was somewhat difficult. The expense of restoration work proved to be costly and necessitated the sale of the MARIPOSA and MONTEREY, still in wartime gray. In 1948, the LURLINE returned to service after a $20 million reconversion. Two new Matson hotels were built on Waikiki in the 1950s, the Surf Rider in 1951, and the Princess Kaiulani in 1955. In 1955, Matson undertook a $60 million shipbuilding program which produced the South Pacific liners MARIPOSA (2) and MONTEREY (2), and the rebuilt wartime MONTEREY was renamed MATSONIA and entered the Pacific Coast - Hawaii service.

In 1956, a research department was established and its first major assignment was to develop the most modern, efficient and economical means of transporting cargo to and from Hawaii. The result was Matson’s freight containerization program, which revolutionized Pacific cargo carrying. In 1958, Matson’s HAWAIIAN MERCHANT departed San Francisco Bay carrying 20 containers on deck, inaugurating containerization in the Pacific. When the HAWAIIAN CITIZEN entered service in April 1960, with a capacity for 436 24-foot containers, it was the first all-container carrier in the Pacific service. The fleet improvement program continued, with Matson freighters converted to combination container and bulk sugar or to container and automobile carriers.

With the focus on containerization growing, Matson divested itself of all non-shipping assets, including its Waikiki hotels, which were sold to the Sheraton Corporation in 1959.

A major ship construction program was undertaken in the late 1960s. When the HAWAIIAN ENTERPRISE (later named MANUKAI) entered service in March 1970, it carried a record load of 1,165 containers and clipped more than a day from the regular 5 1/2 day run from the mainland to Hawaii. Also in 1970, in line with the decision to concentrate on its Pacific Coast-Hawaii freight service, Matson sold its passenger vessels and suspended its Far East service.

In 1969, Matson became a wholly owned subsidiary of Alexander & Baldwin, Inc., strengthening the business ties that formally date back to 1908, when A&B invested $200,000 to acquire a minority interest in Captain Matson’s company. With the focus sharpened, Matson concentrated its efforts on developing a fleet of the finest containerships in the Pacific Coast - Hawaii service and on modernizing and otherwise improving terminal operations. This effort resulted in the construction of the containerships MANULANI, MANUKAI, MAUI, KAUAI, and the ro-ro (roll-on/roll-off) vessels LURLINE and MATSONIA. In 1985, two unique container barges, the HALEAKALA and MAUNA LOA, were introduced to Matson’s Neighbor Island fleet. In 1991, the ro-ro Neighbor Island barge, WAIALEALE, was constructed and added to Matson's Neighbor Island fleet. In 1992, the diesel-powered containership R. J. PFEIFFER was added to the fleet.

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In 1987, Matson formed Matson Intermodal System, Inc. as an intermodal marketing company (IMC) arranging North American rail and truck transportation for shippers and carriers. The company grew steadily through the 1990s and gained industry recognition as one of the nation’s leading IMCs. In 2003, the company was renamed Matson Integrated Logistics in recognition of its continued growth and expanded service offerings.

In 1999, Matson and Stevedoring Services of America, Inc. (SSA) appointed SSA Terminals as the manager of terminal and stevedore operations at Matson Terminals, Inc.’s facilities on the West Coast. MTI continues to operate Matson’s container stevedoring and terminal services in Honolulu.
From 1901 to 2003, Matson Navigation Company's was headquartered in San Francisco, California; in January 2004 the company relocated its headquarters to Oakland, California.

http://www.matson.com/corporate/about_us/history.html (Matson Navigation Company history page) was excerpted with minor editing.

**Collection Scope and Content**

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The volume is titled, "Data sheets for Matson Navigation Company fleet, issued at the office of superintendent engineer." The cover page identifies this as Book no. 18. Vessels included are: Maui (built 1917; freighter), Matsonia (built 1913; freighter), Wilhelmina (built 1909; freighter), Manoa (built 1913; freighter), Lurline (built 1908; freighter), Manulani-Manukai (built 1921, freighter), Mauna Ala (built 1917; freighter), Maliko (built 1918; freighter), Mana (built 1920; freighter) and Enterprise (built 1882; freighter). Specifications include vessel dimensions, cargo capacities, rigging, equipment, and propelling machinery. There is also a section on lake type steamers.

**Collection Arrangement**

1 folder

**Subjects and Indexing Terms**

Freighters
Ships--Maintenance and repair
Matson Navigation Company
San Francisco (Calif.)
Blueprints
Specifications