A Guide to the Robert Edwin Willcox photograph and postcard collection

P96-039

San Francisco Maritime National Historical Park, National Park Service

2014, National Park Service

Title: Robert Edwin Willcox photograph and postcard collection
Date: 1890-1989
Date (bulk): 1960-1988
Identifier/Call Number: P96-039 (SAFR 24246)
Creator: Willcox, Robert Edwin
Physical Description: 31 items.
Repository: San Francisco Maritime National Historical Park, Historic Documents Department
Building E, Fort Mason
San Francisco, CA 94123
Abstract: The Robert Edwin Willcox photograph and postcard collection, 1890-1989, bulk 1960-1988, (SAFR 24246, P96-039) is comprised mainly of photographs and postcards of West Coast and Pacific Ocean passenger steamships. The collection has been processed to the Item level and is open for use.
Physical Location: San Francisco Maritime NHP, Historic Documents Department
Language(s): In English.
Access
This collection is open for use unless otherwise noted.
Publication and Use Rights
Some material may be copyrighted or restricted. It is the researcher’s obligation to determine and satisfy copyright or other case restrictions when publishing or otherwise distributing materials found in the collections.
Processing Note
The descriptions in this collection guide were compiled using the best available sources of information. Such sources include the creator's annotations or descriptions, collection accession files, primary and secondary source material and subject matter experts. While every effort was made to provide accurate information, in the event that you find any errors in this guide please contact the reference staff in order for us to evaluate and make corrections to this guide.
Please cite the title and collection number in any correspondence with our staff.
Preferred Citation
[Item description], [Location within collection organization identified by Collection Number/Series Number/File Unit Number/Item Number], P96-039 (SAFR 24246), Robert Edwin Willcox photograph and postcard collection, San Francisco Maritime National Historical Park
Acquisition Information
SAFR-01105
The collection was donated in 1996 by Professor Alex S. Flett, "presented in memory of Mr. Robert Edwin Willcox, mariner and lover of ships and the sea." There is no information in the collection file regarding the photographer of the photographic prints. The postcards appear to have been purchased (some of the original plastic sleeves, now discarded, had prices written on them and other postcards have a price penciled on the verso). Mr. Willcox might have been the collector and/or photographer, but this could not be confirmed.
Historical or Biographical Note
This collection does not include a historical or biographical note.
Collection Scope and Content
The Robert Edwin Willcox photograph and postcard collection, 1890-1989, bulk 1960-1988, (SAFR 24246, P96-039) is comprised mainly of photographs and postcards of West Coast and Pacific Ocean passenger steamships. The collection has been processed to the Item level and is open for use.
Contains photographs of coastal steamships and ocean liners as well as a replica whaling bark, 1890-1989, bulk 1960-1988. There are 31 unique photographic images in 31 physical forms (18 color photographic prints, 7 color offset lithographic postcards, 4 color letterpress halftone postcards, 1 color collotype postcard, and 1 black-and-white collotype postcard). Many of the items show vessels that traveled along the West Coast of North America and across the Pacific Ocean to various locations, including California, Hawaii, and Alaska. The collection also includes photographs of lake steamers, and two steamships are shown repurposed as floating restaurants in California.

The photographic prints taken in 1988 (Items 01-18) show EARNSLAW (built 1912; passenger steamship) underway on Lake Wakatipu, New Zealand; PRINCESS LOUISE (built 1921; passenger steamship) moored as a restaurant in San Pedro, California; and QUEEN MARY (built 1934; passenger steamship) moored as a hotel and restaurant in Long Beach, California. The postcards (Items 19-31) show the following vessels, nearly all of which are depicted underway: CANBERRA (built 1960; passenger steamship); CONSTITUTION (built 1950; passenger steamship) off Hawaii; EMPRESS OF JAPAN (built 1890; passenger steamship) at British Columbia, Canada; either HARVARD (built 1906; passenger steamship) or YALE (built 1906; passenger steamship); KINGSTON (built 1901; paddle steamship) on Lake Ontario; LURLINE (built 1932; passenger steamship) at Hawaii; MANCHURIA (built 1903; passenger steamship); either MARIPOSA (built 1953; passenger steamship) or MONTEREY (built 1952; passenger steamship) in Alaska; ORIANA (built 1959; passenger steamship) in San Francisco, California; PRINCESS MARGUERITE (built 1948; passenger steamship); and either SANTA MAGDALENA (built 1963; passenger steamship), SANTA MARIA (built 1963; passenger steamship), SANTA MARIANA (built 1963; passenger steamship), or SANTA MERCEDES (built 1964; passenger steamship) in San Francisco. There is one postcard (Item 20) of the replica whaling bark CARTHAGINIAN (bark, 3m: whaler).

**Collection Arrangement**

Photographic prints are arranged alphabetically by vessel name, followed by postcards arranged alphabetically by vessel name.

**Subjects and Indexing Terms**

Ocean liners
Passenger ships
Lake steamers
Pacific Area
Pacific Coast (U.S.)
Wakatipu, Lake (N.Z.)
Color prints (photographs)
Picture postcards

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**Item No. 01-09.** **Earnslaw (built 1912; passenger steamship) on Lake Wakatipu, New Zealand, 1988**

- **Extent:** 9 photographs.
- **Physical Description:** 9 color photographic prints, 3.5 x 5 in.
- **Scope and Content Note**
  
  Items 01 through 09. Consists of photographs of the stack (Item 01); bridge (Items 02-04); deck view from the bridge looking forward (Item 05); starboard bow detail (Item 06); emblem of the New Zealand Railroad (Item 07); and underway (Item 08). Some locations on the lake are identified as Queenstown and Mount Nicholas. Typed on the verso of each print is a caption and a number: 588A (Items 01-03), 5-88F (Items 04-07), and 5-88G (Items 08-09).

**Item No. 10.** **Princess Louise (built 1921; passenger steamship) moored as a restaurant in San Pedro, California, view off port bow, 1988**

- **Extent:** 1 photograph.
- **Physical Description:** 1 color photographic print, 3.5 x 5 in.
- **Scope and Content Note**
  
  The Vincent Thomas Bridge is partially in view.
  
  **Caption:** Typed on the verso: "5-88C Princess Louise Restaurant, San Pedro, Calif."
Item No. 11-18. **Queen Mary (built 1934; passenger steamship) moored as a restaurant and hotel in Long Beach, California, 1988**

- **Extent:** 8 photographs.
- **Physical Description:** 8 color photographic prints, 3.5 x 5 in.
- **Scope and Content Note**
  - Items 11 through 18. Consists of photographs of the stacks and ventilators (Items 11-13); wheelhouse interior (Item 14); views off the port bow (Items 15-17); and bow view from a distance (Item 18). Typed on the verso of each print is a caption and a number: 5-88B (Items 11-14) and 5-88C (Items 15-18).

Item No. 19. **Canberra (built 1960; passenger steamship) underway, view off the port bow, 1961-1982**

- **Extent:** 1 photograph.
- **Physical Description:** 1 color letterpress halftone postcard, 3.5 x 5.5 in.
- **Scope and Content Note**
  - P. & O. and Orient Line vessel.
  - Caption: Printed on the verso: "S.S. CANBERRA. P. & O. and Orient Line. 45,000 gross tons. Length 820 feet. Speed 27 1/2 knots."

Item No. 20. **Carthaginian (bark, 3m: whaler) underway, view off the starboard bow, circa 1966-1973**

- **Creator/Collector:** Allan, Edwin B.
- **Extent:** 1 photograph.
- **Physical Description:** 1 color offset lithographic postcard, 3.5 x 5.5 in.
- **Scope and Content Note**
  - Replica of a whaling vessel.
  - Caption: Printed on the verso: "THE 'CARTHAGINIAN' - a whaling barque also known as the 'Thetis' in the movie 'Hawaii' - now a mobile museum at Lahaina, Maui, Hawaii. Photo by Edwin B. Allan."

Item No. 21. **Constitution (built 1950; passenger steamship) underway off Oahu, Hawaii, aerial starboard view, circa 1981-1989**

- **Extent:** 1 photograph.
- **Physical Description:** 1 color offset lithographic postcard, 3.5 x 5.5 in.
- **Scope and Content Note**
  - Diamondhead and Honolulu are in the distance. American Hawaii Cruises vessel.
  - Caption: Printed on the verso: "American Hawaii Cruises. S.S. CONSTITUTION - Cruising by Honolulu's famed Waikiki Beach. The 30,090 ton, 800 passenger American flag luxury cruise ship sails every Saturday for seven days from Honolulu to Hilo and Kona on the 'Big Island' of Hawaii; then on to Kahului, Maui, and Nawiliwili, Kauai."

Item No. 22. **Empress of Japan (built 1890; passenger steamship) underway in Vancouver Harbor, British Columbia, Canada, port quarter view, 1890-1922**

- **Extent:** 1 photograph.
- **Physical Description:** 1 color letterpress halftone postcard, 3.5 x 5.5 in.
- **Scope and Content Note**
  - Caption: Printed above the image: "'Empress of Japan' in Vancouver Harbour, B.C."
Item No. 23. Either Harvard (built 1906; passenger steamship) or Yale (built 1906; passenger steamship) underway, nearly port broadside view, 1921-1922
   Extent: 1 photograph.
   Physical Description: 1 color letterpress halftone postcard, 3.5 x 5.5 in. Correspondence is handwritten on verso. Postmarked 1922.
   Scope and Content Note
   Los Angeles Steamship Company vessel.
   Caption: Printed above the image: "Super-Express Steamers 'YALE' and 'HARVARD' / LOS ANGELES STEAMSHIP COMPANY / De-Luxe Passenger Service between Los Angeles and San Francisco / Barber Shop and Manicurist on 'B' Deck."

Item No. 24. Kingston (built 1901; paddle steamship) underway on Lake Ontario, view off the starboard bow, 1913-1949
   Extent: 1 photograph.
   Physical Description: 1 color collotype postcard, 3.5 x 5.5 in.
   Scope and Content Note
   Canada Steamship Lines vessel.

Item No. 25. Lurline (built 1932; passenger steamship) getting underway from Honolulu Harbor, Hawaii, port quarter view, 1932-1963
   Extent: 1 photograph.
   Physical Description: 1 color offset lithographic postcard, 3.5 x 5.5 in.
   Scope and Content Note
   Matson Lines vessel.
   Caption: Printed on the verso: "S.S. Lurline in Honolulu Harbor. Photo Courtesy Hawaii Visitors Bureau."

Item No. 26. Manchuria (built 1903; passenger steamship) underway, view off port bow, 1902-1915
   Extent: 1 photograph.
   Physical Description: 1 black-and-white collotype postcard, 3.5 x 5.5 in.
   Scope and Content Note
   Pacific Mail Steamship Company vessel.
   Caption: Printed below the image: "P.M.S. MANCHURIA."

Item No. 27. Either Mariposa (built 1953; passenger steamship) or Monterey (built 1952; passenger steamship) underway in Glacier Bay, Alaska, aerial nearly port broadside view, 1971-1978
   Extent: 1 photograph.
   Physical Description: 1 color offset lithographic postcard, 3.5 x 5.5 in.
   Scope and Content Note
   Pacific Far East Line vessel.
Item No. 28. Oriana (built 1959; passenger steamship) underway in San Francisco Bay, California, view off the starboard bow, 1960-1962

Extent: 1 photograph.

Physical Description: 1 color offset lithographic postcard, 3.5 x 5.5 in. Tear at left edge. An address is handwritten on the verso. Postmarked 1962.

Scope and Content Note
The Golden Gate Bridge is partially in view. The city of San Francisco is in the distance. P. & O. and Orient Line vessel.

Caption: Printed on the verso: “SS ORIANA STAMP VOYAGE / On December 2, 1962, the ORIANA will leave the west coast to sail half way around the world. She will be carrying hundreds of postcards to mail along the way. To get your covers from these 10 far away places, select 10 cards, self-address them, put them in an envelope with $1.00 (to cover cost of stamps and mailing), mail to: P & O - Orient Lines, Inc., 144 Post St., San Francisco, Calif., by November 26. The cards will be mailed back to you from each port. / With Good Luck and Good Fortune. / Capt. Fortune / Hobbymaster.”

Item No. 29. Oriana (built 1959; passenger steamship) anchored, view off port bow, 1960-1986

Extent: 1 photograph.

Physical Description: 1 color letterpress halftone postcard, 3.5 x 5.5 in.

Scope and Content Note
P. & O. and Orient Line vessel.


Item No. 30. Princess Marguerite (built 1948; passenger steamship) underway, view off the starboard bow, 1949-1964

Extent: 1 photograph.

Physical Description: 1 color offset lithographic postcard, 3.5 x 5.5 in. Correspondence is handwritten on verso. Postmarked 1964.

Scope and Content Note
Canadian Pacific Steamship Company vessel.


Item No. 31. Either Santa Magdalena (built 1963; passenger steamship), Santa Maria (built 1963; passenger steamship), Santa Mariana (built 1963; passenger steamship), or Santa Mercedes (built 1964; passenger steamship) underway at San Francisco, California, aerial view, 1978-1984

Extent: 1 photograph.

Physical Description: 1 color offset lithographic postcard, 3.5 x 5.5 in.

Scope and Content Note
The San Francisco-Oakland Bay Bridge as well as San Francisco's downtown and waterfront are in view. Delta Line Cruises vessel.

Caption: Printed on the verso: “SANTA MARIA SANTA MERCEDES / SANTA MARIANA SANTA MAGDALENA / Our Leisure Liners cruise year-round to Canada, Mexico, the Caribbean and around South America.”