



Stephen Curley Papers, 1939-2007

Descriptive Summary and Abstract

Creator: Curley, Stephen
Title: Stephen Curley Papers
Dates: 1939-2007
Abstract: Author and English faculty member at Texas A&M University at Galveston. Graduate of Fordham University (B.A.); and Rice University (Ph.D.) Contains subject and chronological files pertaining to the research for the book, *The Ship that Would Not Die: USS Queens, SS Excambion, and the Texas Clipper*. Dr. Curley conducted exhaustive research on a single ship that began its life as an attack transport in World War II. In 1946, the ship was purchased by the American Export Lines to become the SS Excambion, one of the "Four Aces" cruise ships. In 1965, the ship transitioned into the much beloved training ship, the Texas Clipper, for the Texas Maritime Academy until its retirement in 1996. In 2007, the Texas Clipper made its final voyage off the coast of Texas where it was sunk to become an artificial reef.

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Received from: Stephen Curley

Biographical Note

Stephen Curley is Regents Professor (English) and an award-winning teacher of literature, writing, and film at Texas A&M University at Galveston. He received his B.A. from Fordham University in New York and his Ph.D. from Rice University in Houston.

He received the two highest awards given by the Galveston campus, one for teaching, the other for overall achievement. He is also the first person from the Galveston campus to have won the highest teaching award given by the College Station campus, and the first to be named Regents Professor by the Texas A&M University System. He is the author of numerous articles. His books include *Celluloid Wars: a Research Guide to American War Film*; *Invisible Texans: Women and Minorities in Texas History*; *Aggies by the Sea: Texas A&M University at Galveston*; and *The Ship That Would Not Die: USS Queens, SS Excambion, and USTS Texas Clipper*.

He has been the recipient of numerous grants for public programs in Galveston on such subjects as the Texas coast, the U.S. Bill of Rights, popular culture, the American Civil War, and the Great Depression. He has released a recording of sea chanteys and often speaks about movies and sea-related topics.

This research collection was compiled between 2005-2011 when Dr. Curley researched and wrote *The Ship That Would Not Die*. In 2006, the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department awarded him a travel grant to visit collections and conduct interviews. The book was published by the Texas A&M University Press in 2011.

Source:

Curley, Stephen. Biographical sketch. Copy added to Biographical File in the collection.

Curley, Stephen. Email, Feb. 17, 2014. See Biographical File.

Scope and Content Note

This collection contains the research notes, photographs, rough drafts, copies of primary and secondary resources about the history of a ship through its various transformations and renamings: USS Queens; SS Excambion; and the T/S Texas Clipper. Most of the records are photocopies and scans from various archives. The records follow Dr. Curley's arrangement for the writing of the book. There are notebooks with information about each ship in chronological order and containing copies of articles and books. The chronological files provide a remarkable timeline for documented activities. In addition, Dr. Curley provided files pertaining to the review process and publication of the book, along with email comments from grateful readers.

Dr. Curley donated these records to the Jack K. Williams Library at Texas A&M University at Galveston in February, 2014.

Organization of the Papers

Series 1. Biographical Information

Series 2. Notebooks- Collected Information

Series 3. Chronological Files

Series 4. Interviews and Personal Narratives
Series 5. Background Information
Series 6. Publishing History
Series 7. American Export Line Annual Reports
Series 8. Oversized materials
Series 9. Miscellaneous
Series 10. Artifacts

Restrictions

Access Open for research.

Usage Restrictions: Access to fragile materials may be limited. Some materials may not be reproduced and travel to the collection may be necessary. Contact Jack K. Williams library for more information.

Administration Information

Provenance: Donated by Stephen Curley

Rights: Copyright is retained by the authors of items in these papers, or their descendants, as stipulated by United States copyright law.

Processed by: Alexandra Mitchell and Samuel Chivers, 2016

Detailed Description of the Collection

Series 1. Biographical Information

Curriculum Vita; introduction.

BOX 1

Series 2. Notebooks- Collected Information

Subseries 1. SS Excambion

Book I: Report on Excambion, Texas Clipper; illus. and brochure

Book II: SS Excambion

Official Logbooks (selected excerpts)

Selected pages photocopied from originals at the National Archives, New York City. Because of privacy laws, the NARA staff made all photocopies and eliminated sensitive information. Dr. Curley wrote: "I was not permitted to view the originals." NARA has logbooks from 64 of the 68 voyages of Excambion (voyages 10, 17, 18, and 20 are missing)

Book III: SS Excambion

American Export Lines, Inc., Annual Reports (excerpts).

NOTES: American Export Lines, the company that operated SS Excambion and all the Four Aces, was one of the top shipping companies in United States during the heyday of the American Merchant Marine. Copies of annual reports have been obtained from the collections of the U.S. Merchant Marine Academy at Kings Point, NY; Yale University Library; and the Science, Industry, and Business Branch of the New York Public Library.

NOTES: The American Export Lines, Inc. published these financial reports every year (some years are missing from the photocopied collection because of the difficulty in locating those reports.) Of special interest is the letter to the stockholders in each annual report. These letters, although they tend to present the company's positive spin to negative news, accurately convey relevant economic trends. They also reveal a great deal about the corporate culture and the role played by the Four Aces in the company's overall strategies.

Book IV: SS Excambion Sources & Illustrations

Primary Sources

William J. Glynn, "The Ships of the American Export Lines" 2003-04

Images relating to SS Excambion

BOX 2

Subseries 2. USTS Texas Clipper

Book V: USTS Texas Clipper

Texas Clipper archival materials, 1962-1972.

Book VI: USTS Texas Clipper

Texas Clipper archival material, 1973-1983.

BOX 3

Book VII: USTS Texas Clipper

Texas Clipper archival material, 1984-1996.

Subseries 3. USS Queens

Book IX: USS Queens

Barto Arnold, Report on USS Queens, including war diary and war log. Title: *Texas Clipper Ex-USS Queens (APA 103) Brief History 1944-1946.*

Book X: USS Queens

Deck Log I, Dec. 1944-June 1945

Book XI: USS Queens

Deck Log II, Sept. 1945-June 1946

BOX 4

Series 3. Chronological Files

Files documenting the history and activities of the ship beginning in 1939 through its last cruise in 1993. In 1966, the Texas Clipper was sunk off the coast of Texas to become an artificial reef. Includes news clippings; logbook entries; college yearbooks, brochures, reports, personal narratives; advertising; photographs, and other memorabilia.

Photocopies.

OF SPECIAL NOTE:

1988: Gardner, Mary. "The Summer of the Texas Clipper," 1988, unpublished non-fiction. Mary Gardner served as the freshman English teacher during the 1988 summer cruise of the Texas Clipper. She provides a very personal account of what it was like to sail with the students and crew of the training ship, her work with the freshman "prep cadets," and the locales of cruise stops along the way.

1993: "Scrapbook" compiled by Dr. Stephen Curley on the last cruise of the T/S Texas Clipper. The scrapbook contains photographs, hand-outs, maps, lyrics and amusing captions written by Dr. Curley. Official stops by the ship include: the Canary Islands; Cork, Ireland; Gdynia, Poland; and St. John's Newfoundland.

[Note referring to this scrapbook was placed in UA24.10 photo collection in the 1993 Cruise photograph folder.]

Subseries 1. 1939-1950

A collection of documents related to shipping per year, organized in chronological order, additional information assigned its own folder and catalogued in chronological order. Made up of various documents and photographs.

- 3.1.1 American Exports pre WWII
- 3.1.2 1938
- 3.1.3 1941
- 3.1.4 1943
- 3.1.5 1994
- 3.1.6 1945
- 3.1.7 1946
- 3.1.8 Excambion Ports
- 3.1.9 American exports Air
- 3.1.10 Excambion Miscellaneous
- 3.1.11 1947
- 3.1.12 1948
- 3.1.13 1949
- 3.1.14 1950

Subseries 2. 1951-1960

A collection of documents related to shipping per year, organized in chronological order, additional information assigned its own folder and catalogued in chronological order. Comprised of various documents and photographs.

- 3.2.1 1951
- 3.2.2 1952
- 3.2.3 1953
- 3.2.4 1954
- 3.2.5 1955
- 3.2.6 1956
- 3.2.7 1957
- 3.2.8 1958
- 3.2.9 1959
- 3.2.10 1960

Subseries 3. 1961-1970

A collection of documents related to shipping per year, organized in chronological order, additional information assigned its own folder and catalogued in chronological order. Made up of various documents and photographs.

- 3.3.1 1962
- 3.3.2 1963
- 3.3.3 1964

BOX 5

- 3.3.4 1965
- 3.3.5 1966
- 3.3.6 1967
- 3.3.7 1968
- 3.3.8 1969
- 3.3.9 1970

Subseries 4. 1971-1980

A collection of documents related to shipping per year, organized in chronological order, additional information assigned its own folder and catalogued in chronological order. Comprised of various documents and photographs.

- 3.4.1 1971
- 3.4.2 1972
- 3.4.3 1973
- 3.4.4 1974
- 3.4.5 1975
- 3.4.6 P.O.D 1976

BOX 6

- 3.4.7 1977
- 3.4.8 1978
- 3.4.9 1979
- 3.4.10 1980

Subseries 5. 1981-1990

A collection of documents related to shipping per year, organized in chronological order, additional information assigned its own folder and catalogued in chronological order. Made up of various documents and photographs.

- 3.5.1 1981
- 3.5.2 1982
- 3.5.3 1983
- 3.5.4 1984
- 3.5.5 1985
- 3.5.6 1986
- 3.5.7 1987
- 3.5.8 1988

BOX 7

- 3.5.9 1988 Cruise Memoir Mary Gardener
- 3.5.10 1989
- 3.5.11 1990

Subseries 6. 1991-2006

A collection of documents related to shipping per year, organized in chronological order, additional information assigned its own folder and catalogued in chronological order. Comprised of various documents and photographs.

- 3.6.1 1991
- 3.6.2 1992
- 3.6.3 1993 Clipper Cruise Scrapbook
- 3.6.4 1993
- 3.6.5 1994
- 3.6.6 1995
- 3.6.7 1996
- 3.6.8 2005
- 3.6.9 2006

BOX 8

Series 4. Interviews and Personal Narratives

A collection of documents, copies and originals, pertaining to interviews about various ships and cruises. The series also contains an essay written about cruise life by a K. Fanning. The series is organized and sorted by topic.

- 4.1.1 Emails Queens Interviews
- 4.1.2 Excambion Interviews
- 4.1.3 Fanning, Karl P – View of Cadet Life (1962-66) Fanning, Karl P. “View of Cadet Life, 1962-1966,” for Dr. Joseph M Nance, History 685
- 4.1.4 Texas Clipper Interviews

BOX 9

Series 5. Ship Documents

Collected materials, primary and secondary resources for the writing of the book. Includes logbooks, annual reports, and copies of photographs, histories and related information. Visual Orientation: Notes by Dr. Curley on a drawing to help identify the official parts of the ship. The series is split into subseries organized via Ship and further sorted by subject. A collection of documents, photos, diagrams and newspaper articles make up this series.

Subseries 1. USS Queens

- 5.1.1 USS Adair (sister ship of USS Queens)
- 5.1.2 USS Dauphin (sister ship of USS Queens)
- 5.1.3 USS Duchess (sister ship of USS Queens)
- 5.1.4 USS Queens Photographs (copies of prints; thumbnails of scans, etc.
- 5.1.5 USS Queens Miscellany
- 5.1.6 USS Queens Miscellany
- 5.1.7 USS Queens Publications: excerpts and bibliography
- 5.1.8 World War II: Ancillary materials.
- 5.1.9 USS Leedstown: Transport Attack vessel WWII
- 5.1.10 USS Shelby
- 5.1.11 U.S. Navy: communiqués & press releases; Beaumont Reserve Fleet; knots.
- 5.1.12 Panoramic Photograph of Crew, 1946 (**Oversize Box 16**)

BOX 10

Subseries 2. SS Excambion

- 5.2.1 Advertising for the Four Aces
- 5.2.2 SS Excambion: Departures/Arrivals; voyages, other statistics
- 5.2.3 American Export Lines: Annual Reports (complete copies) **date**
- 5.2.4 American Export Lines: Annual Reports (excerpts) 1945-1963
- 5.2.5 Excambion Reports
- 5.2.6 American Export Lines: history, etc. sent by Hermann Allen, CEO

- 5.2.7 American Export Lines from W B Johnsen
- 5.2.8 SS Excambion: Log Books
- 5.2.9 SS Excambion: Copies of Photographs
- 5.2.10 American Export Line Posters, Excambion (**Oversize Box 16**)

BOX 11

- 5.2.10 SS Excambion: Archival copies, handwritten notes.
- 5.2.11 American Export Lines: computer searches of history and artifacts.
- 5.2.12 Mariner's Museum (Newport News, VA): correspondence re: gun mounts.
- 5.2.13 SS Exochorda: sister ship of the Excambion. Used as floating dorm at "Stephens Institute of Technology."
- 5.2.14 American Export Lines: History in 7 parts.
- 5.2.15 SS Excambion: Publications about its background
- 5.2.16 Excambion: Primary Sources
- 5.2.17 Ship Visual Orientation

BOX 12

Subseries 3. Texas Clipper

- 5.3.1 Texas Clipper: History
- 5.3.2 Texas Clipper: correspondence; a paper delivered by Dr. Curley;
- 5.3.3 Texas Clipper: Book Photos
- 5.3.4 Texas Clipper II: Chauvenet
- 5.3.5 Texas Clipper III: Sirius. Copies of photographs and statistical info.
- 5.3.6 Other Maritime colleges and Programs
- 5.3.7 Texas Clipper: Correspondence regarding the Official Log Books for the Clipper.
- 5.3.8 Texas Clipper: Photos of the Texas Parks and Wildlife-artificial reef. CD
- 5.3.9 Texas Clipper: Sinking the Clipper to make artificial reef, 2007.
- 5.3.10 Texas Clipper Photos

BOX 13

Series 6. Publishing History

Publishing history: Letters from Dr. Curley's publishers, reviews of the prepublication manuscript, and the return of photographic scans from Texas A&M University Press. This series is split into subseries via major publication company.

Subseries 1: Tamu Press

- 6.1.1 Tamu press series editors, proposal
- 6.1.2 Tamu Press (Fd. 1-3) Correspondence
- 6.1.3 Tamu Press Images

Subseries 2: Texas Parks and Wildlife, Texas Clipper

- 6.2.1 Texas Parks and Wildlife
- 6.2.2 Texas Parks and Wildlife 1 (latest Version)
- 6.2.3 Texas Parks and Wildlife 2 (latest Version)
- 6.2.4 Texas Parks and Wildlife 3 (latest Version)
- 6.2.5 Texas Parks and Wildlife and Texas Clipper Acct: 449070
- 6.2.6 Texas Clipper Book

Subseries 3: Miscellaneous

- 6.3.1 Draft Copies
- 6.3.2 Ship Book, Prospectus
- 6.3.3 Publication History: Trip Expenses
- 6.3.4 Aggies by the Sea News Clippings
- 6.3.5 Aggies by the Sea Correspondence

BOX 14

Series 7. Miscellaneous

- 7.1 Reefing: Take Copy of Book MS
- 7.2 Saul Steinberg
- 7.3 Music
- 7.4 Miscellaneous Correspondence

BOX 15

Series 8. Artifacts

Falstaff Beer Mug: Texas Maritime Academy cadets used to tour the Falstaff Brewery on 33rd and Church Streets, Galveston, Texas. The mug has "Texas Maritime Academy" printed at the top of the mug. This mug belonged to Dr. Stephen Curley.

BOX 16

Oversized materials