

terline. The rudders were fully submerged at normal operating draughts, even when EASTCLIFFE HALL was running light, thus achieving maximum rudder effectiveness at all times.

EASTCLIFFE HALL was painted in traditional Hall livery: black hull and fore-castle, white superstructure, and black funnel with white "H-in-a-Wishbone" emblem. The spar deck was painted a deep red, while fore-castle and poop decks were a light grey, as were the bridge deck and monkey's island. Masts and booms were buff with black bases and tips. The hull below the 12-foot draught marks was red. The "Halco" billboard later seen on the sides of various other vessels of the fleet never was applied to EASTCLIFFE HALL.

The first few years of her service saw EASTCLIFFE HALL operating in the traditional canaller trades. Pulpwood was the staple westbound cargo, loaded at lower-river and gulf ports such as Godbout, Trinity Bay, Buctouche and Mont Louis, and transported upriver to destinations such as Trois-Rivieres, Waddington, New York, and Erie, Pennsylvania. The return trip could involve a load of coal, perhaps from Oswego to Port Alfred, or grain from, say, Port Colborne to Montreal.

On one of those pulpwood runs in 1956, EASTCLIFFE HALL was caught at Mont Louis as a summer hurricane swept through the area. It was a predicament like the one that nearly had destroyed Hall's JOHN H. PRICE at Ste. Anne des Monts a few years before. Battered at the unprotected timber wharf by large waves, EASTCLIFFE HALL survived, thanks to judicious work with the engines by Capt. Walter M. Bowen, though not without shipping water in her holds, snapping mooring lines and wearing deep grooves into bollards on the wharf.

Cargo capacity and trouble-free operation became the hallmarks of FRANKCLIFFE HALL, HUTCHCLIFFE HALL and EASTCLIFFE HALL, prompting the Hall Corporation to sell off to the Misener interests seven of its steamers, built between 1927 and 1929, when an opportunity to do so arose in 1955, and then to plan the building of additional diesel canallers. A new WESTCLIFFE HALL (II), built at Grangemouth, Scotland, joined the fleet in mid-1956, followed by her sistership EAGLESCLIFFE HALL (II) early the following year, while the Davie-built CONISCLIFFE HALL (II) and ROCKCLIFFE HALL (II) were added in 1957 and 1958. All of these differed only in minor detail from the three earlier Vickers sisters; the most noticeable differences lay in the arrangement of the masts and booms, and the pilothouse windows.

The 1959 opening of the St. Lawrence Seaway ended the careers of most older canallers, and for the newer ones it meant changes in trade patterns. Several were left as built to service existing contracts. EASTCLIFFE HALL, however, was one of those selected to go under the knife to enhance her viability. During the winter of 1958-1959, she was taken in hand by her original builder, Canadian Vickers Shipyards Ltd., Montreal, and she was lengthened by 90 feet and her spar deck raised by three feet, nine inches, bringing her to 349 feet overall, and raising her Gross and Net Tonnages to 3335 and 2614, respectively. The rebuilding produced a 65% increase in her cubic capacity.

The reconfigured spar deck had six hatches, each much larger than the originals. An additional mast and boom set was stepped, making her a genuine "three-master" (actually four, counting the little pipe foremast). Thereafter, the three former sisterships always could be distinguished at a distance; HUTCHCLIFFE HALL, similarly lengthened and deepened in 1959 but by Davie Shipbuilding Ltd. at Lauzon, carried her masthead running lights on her mizzen mast, while EASTCLIFFE's were now set on the main. FRANKCLIFFE HALL (I), renamed (b) NORTHCLIFFE HALL in 1962, was deepened by the Vickers yard in 1959, but she never was lengthened. Changes to EASTCLIFFE HALL during her rebuilding also involved the construction of free-standing companionways to accommodations and the fitting of direct engine controls in the pilothouse.