



McLOUTH STEEL CORPORATION **COLLECTION**

1950's – 1990's

Primarily 1950's – 1970's

Accession Number: 2018.039

Size:	1.5 linear feet
Number of Boxes:	3 archival boxes 4 oversized items
Box Numbers:	IND-14-A to IND-14-C; A22-3
Object Numbers:	2018.039.001 to 2018.039.385

McLOUTH STEEL CORPORATION COLLECTION

ACQUISITION: Donated to the Detroit Historical Museum by John A. Stavola in 2018.

OWNERSHIP & COPYRIGHT: The Detroit Historical Society except where copyrights for publications, manuscripts, and photos remain in effect.

ARRANGEMENT: Organized and catalogued with a finding aid prepared by Wayne State University practicum student, Laura Kennedy, in May-July 2018. The Detroit Historical Society uses *PastPerfect* museum software for its records database. All items in the database are assigned a 10-digit number in the format, 0000.000.000. Consequently, items listed in the Series Box List section of this finding aid are shown as object numbers.

ACCESS & USE: Opened to researchers and other interested individuals in 2018 without restriction except where physical condition or technology precludes use.

BACKGROUND

HISTORY of COLLECTION

This collection contains mostly photographs showing two major expansion projects at the McLouth Steel Corporation. The first, completed between 1953 and 1954 was the expansion of the Detroit facility to include a stainless steel production line. The section major project included removing the No. 1 pickling line and replacing it with the new No. 11 continuous annealing and pickling (CAP) line. This project was completed between 1974 and 1975. The collection also contains other miscellaneous photographs of production lines and machinery at the facility. Finally, there are several annual reports spanning the 1950s through the mid-1970s, correspondence, a marketing brochure, four oversized photos, and a J&L Specialty Products Corporation materials sample board.

Once the ninth largest steel company in the country, McLouth Steel Corporation was founded by Donald B. McLouth in 1934 in Detroit, Michigan. In the beginning, the company rolled steel from slabs provided by other companies. Following World War II, the company purchased a government surplus electric furnace that would allow it to produce its own steel from scrap. By 1948 the company began a \$100 million expansion to construct the Trenton facility. In 1954 the cold rolled steel facility in Gibraltar opened.

McLouth was an innovative company and was the first in the country to adopt the use of the basic oxygen furnace (BOF) which later became the standard for the industry. In the early 1960s, McLouth became the first steel company in the United States to use the continuous caster method of steel production. It was also one of the first steel operation to use computerized equipment. In 1981 the company's headquarters moved to the Trenton facility from the Detroit facility located at 300 S. Livernois. While recognized as one of the most advanced companies in the industry, a lack of diversification (the majority of McLouth's customers were in the automobile industry) and the economic recession forced the company to file for bankruptcy in 1981. The stainless steel operation in Detroit was sold to Jones & Laughlin Steel Company, which later merged with Republic Steel to form LTV Steel. J&L moved the majority of the stainless steel operations to its plant in Midlands, Pennsylvania in 1997 and closed the Detroit facility in 2000.

McLouth's Trenton and Gibraltar holdings were purchased in 1981 by Cyrus Tang who changed the company's name to McLouth Steel Products Co. While initially the company produced profits, by 1987 they again filed for bankruptcy protection. The company was sold for a second time in 1996 to Michael Wilkinson. Finally, in 1997 the company was renamed DSC. In 2017 the land in Trenton was seized by Wayne County for failure to pay back taxes.

TIMELINE of COLLECTION

1934	Donald B. McLouth opens McLouth Steel in Detroit, Michigan as a small conversion steel mill.
1948	McLouth's McLouth Steel begins its \$100 million Trenton expansion.
1953-1954	McLouth expands its Detroit facility to include a stainless steel line.
1954	Work at the cold rolled steel facility in Gibraltar begins.
1954	Donald B. McLouth dies on July 10.
1974-1975	McLouth replaces the No. 1 pickling line with the new No. 11 Continuous Annealing and Pickling (CAP) line
1981	Company files for bankruptcy. The Detroit facility is purchased by Jones & Laughlin Steel. The company's headquarters moves to Trenton.
1997	J&L moves its stainless steel operations to Midlands, Pennsylvania.
2000	J&L closes the Detroit facility.

CONTENTS

SCOPE and CONTENT NOTES

Physical Description

The bulk of the collection is photographs documenting two renovations/expansions made at the Detroit facility, but there are also annual reports and a few pieces of correspondence.

Series Description

Items are filed in the following series:

- I. Correspondence, Marketing, and Annual Reports
- II. Photographs
- III. Flat File Drawer

Editorial Discussion

Processing followed the original order of the items for the most part. Where the original order intentions were not clear, the items were arranged chronologically or by subject. Four items from Series II, Subseries F are stored in drawer A22-3.

SERIES BOX LIST

SERIES I: Correspondence, Marketing, and Annual Reports

The items in this series consist of correspondence regarding a rail road right of way, a marketing brochure, and annual reports for several years spanning from the 1950s to the mid-1970s.

Box IND-14-A

- 2018.039.001 Legal description of land with drawings
- 2018.039.002 Letter to McLouth Steel from New York Central Rail Road System
- 2018.039.003 Marketing brochure
- 2018.039.004 Annual report for year ended December 31, 1950
- 2018.039.005 Annual report for year ended December 31, 1955
- 2018.039.006 Annual report for year ended December 31, 1953
- 2018.039.007 Annual report for year ended December 31, 1954
- 2018.039.008 Annual report for year ended December 31, 1955
- 2018.039.009 Annual report for year ended December 31, 1959
- 2018.039.010 Annual report for year ended December 31, 1963
- 2018.039.011 Annual report for year ended December 31, 1968
- 2018.039.012 Annual report for year ended December 31, 1970
- 2018.039.013 Annual report for year ended December 31, 1971
- 2018.039.014 Annual report for year ended December 31, 1974

SERIES II: Photographs

SUBSERIES A –No. 1 Pickling Line (Before)

The “before” pictures showing the No. 1 pickling line that was removed to construct the No. 11 Continuous Annealing & Pickling line between 1974 and 1975.

Box IND-14-A

- 2018.039.015-.061 Forty-six photographs showing the No. 1 pickling line which was replaced by the No. 11 Continuous Annealing & Pickling (CAP) line.

SUBSERIES B –No. 11 Continuous Annealing & Pickling (CAP) Line (After)

The “after” photographs showing the construction process for the No. 11 Continuous Annealing & Pickling (CAP) Line in 1975.

Box IND-14-A

- 2018.039.062-.124 Sixty-two photographs showing the construction of the No. 11 CAP line.

Box IND-14-B

- 2018.039.125-.225 One hundred photographs showing the construction of the No. 11 CAP line.

SUBSERIES C –No. 5 CAP Line

A series of photographs showing various components of the No. 5 CAP line.

Box IND-14-B

2018.039.226-.241 Fifteen photographs showing the No. 5 CAP line.

SUBSERIES D – Miscellaneous Pictures

Photographs showing various production lines and other aspects of the corporation's facilities.

Box IND-14-B

- 2018.039.245-.251 Seven photographs by Jim Shepperd showing interior of factory, specifically one of the production lines and a Nash mill.
- 2018.039.252 Photograph of a man standing beside a Kolene salt bath.
- 2018.039.253 Photograph showing the exterior of the McLouth Steel building.
- 2018.039.254-.264 Ten photographs showing the interior of the McLouth Steel building, specifically the 6, 7, and 8 production lines.
- 2018.039.265 Six small photographs showing the exterior of the electric furnace.
- 2018.039.266-.275 Ten photographs showing the installation of the temporary motor generator.
- 2018.039.276-.279 Four photographs showing the new 50" skin mill area.
- 2018.039.280-.285 Six photographs showing reels cracked from welding.
- 2018.039.286 One photograph showing the Waterbury Farrel skim mill.
- 2018.039.287 One photograph showing a drive motor.
- 2018.039.288 One photograph showing the No. 2 line sheet polisher.
- 2018.039.289-.295 Seven photos showing workers doing various tasks, including inspecting steel, loading rolls of steel onto trucks, and manning different machines.
- 2018.039.296 One photograph showing the hot mill stack on the roof of the building.
- 2018.039.297 One photograph showing a female security guard checking a load of steel rolls.
- 2018.039.298 One photograph showing a detail of a motor generator.
- 2018.039.299 One photograph showing a 1941 six-man bowling team.
- 2018.039.300-.303 Four photographs showing a lecture, training, or a presentation.
- 2018.039.304-.305 Two photographs showing groups of workers.
- 2018.039.306 One photograph showing men working on the No. 4 line finishing area.

SUBSERIES E – Stainless Expansion

A series of black and white photographs showing the company's expansion to include a stainless steel line between 1953 and 1954. Additionally, two color photographs of the motor generator room for the stainless steel line are included.

Box IND-14-C

- 2018.039.307-.379 Seventy-two photographs showing the construction of the 1953-1954 expansion for the stainless steel line.
- 2018.039.382-.383 Two color photographs of the power generator room for the stainless steel line.

SERIES III: Flat File Drawer

Flat file drawer A22-3 in the Archives room contains four photographs mounted on mats for framing and one materials sample board.

File Drawer A22-3

- 2018.039.380 One color photograph showing the exterior of the Trenton facility.
- 2018.039.381 One color photograph showing the No. 11 Continuous Annealing & Pickling line.
- 2018.039.384 One color photograph showing the exterior of a steel plant in winter.
- 2018.039.385 One wooden materials sample board with eight types of steel and the J&L logo in the center.

ABBREVIATIONS USED

- CAP Continuous Annealing and Pickling
- GE General Electric
- J&L Jones & Laughlin
- PM Production Machinery

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Davis, Mike (ed.), *The Technology Century: 100 Years of ESD – The Engineering Society 1895-1995*. Detroit: The Engineering Society, 1995.

Stavola, John A. "Tony", interview by Laura Kennedy, June 12, 2018.

KEY WORDS/SEARCH TERMS

Annealing and Pickling Line

Babcock & Wilcox

Commercial Color Photography

Commercial Contracting Corporation

Continuous Annealing & Pickling

General Electric (GE)

McLouth Steel

Motor City Electric

Nash

Pickling

Shepperd, Jim

United (United Wean)

Walbridge Aldinger Co.