

McLean County Museum of History

John Holder WWII Collection

Processed by
Robert Bradley
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Collection Information

VOLUME OF COLLECTION:	1 Box
COLLECTION DATES:	1942-85; mostly 1942-45.
RESTRICTIONS:	None
REPRODUCTION RIGHTS:	Permission to reproduce or publish material in this collection must be obtained in writing from the McLean County Museum of History
ALTERNATIVE FORMATS:	None
OTHER FINDING AIDS:	None
LOCATION:	Archives
NOTES:	None

Brief History

John David Holder was born on December 1, 1910 to Sam and Georgie (Espey) Holder in Normal, Illinois. He had two brothers George and Dan. He was a graduate of Bloomington High School and Lake Forest Academy. He received a bachelor's degree in business administration from the University of Illinois in Champaign, Illinois.

Upon graduation, he worked at the People's Bank in Bloomington from 1933 to 1935. Then John worked at Owens Illinois Glass Company in Gas City, Indiana from 1935 to 1942. It was from Gas City where John was called to active duty for World War II in May of 1942. He entered service as a commissioned officer in the Navy.

In his active service, John completed several service schools including Armed Guard School, Sub-chaser Training, Fleet Sound School, Ordnance and Gunnery School, and Amphibious Training. He trained at various sites across the nation; his active duty was conducted in the Pacific theater.

During his active service from 1942 to 1945, John served on four different ships. In July 1942, he was assigned to be the commander of the Naval Armed Guard of the MS Weltevreden. This ship was a commercial ocean liner that belonged to the Royal Rotterdam Lloyd, a Netherlands shipping company. It was converted to a troopship during WWII. The U.S. Navy Armed Guard was a service branch of the U.S. Navy that was responsible for defending U.S. and Allied ships from attack by enemy aircraft, submarines, and surface ships during WWII. During John's assignment, the ship traveled to Noumea, New Caledonia, Wellington New Zealand, Espiritu Santo, and Guadalcanal.

In July 1943, John started his service on the SS James H. McClintock. He was the commanding officer of the Naval Armed Guard for the ship. This ship was one of the 2,700 Liberty Ships built in the U.S. during WWII to move men and material to the front. During John's time on the ship, it traveled to Noumea, New Caledonia, Guadalcanal, Tulagi, and Espiritu Santo.

In October 1944, the LST 807 was commissioned from Evansville, Indiana with John as the commanding officer. An LST or "Landing Ship, Tank" was an amphibious naval vessel designed to transport men and equipment and land them on beaches without ports. They were armed to provide some covering fire for the landing troops on hostile beaches. Type II LSTs were built in the U.S. Under John's command, LST 807 participated in the assault and occupation of Iwo Jima, and the assault and occupation of Okinawa.

In July 1945, John became the commanding officer of LST 213. This ship was built in Seneca, Illinois. Under his command, the ship went to Eniwetok, Saipan, Okinawa, Yokohama, and Sagami. John had to deal with a typhoon while commanding the ship in the Pacific.

During his service career from 1942 to 1945, John logged 23,000 miles of travel on land and 86,000 miles of travel at sea, which included a couple of thousand miles by air. He totaled more than 109,000 miles of travel during his active duty. He was honorably discharged from the U.S. Navy in December 1945 at the rank of Lieutenant Commander.

Upon his discharge, John returned to live in Bloomington, Illinois. He worked as a comptroller at Owens Illinois Glass Co. from 1945 to 1949. He was promoted to be a plant manager in the company's box factory. In 1950, he started working in State Farm's purchasing department. In that department, he had positions as a buyer, purchasing agent, and assistant director of administrative services. In 1958, he became director of administrative services and then the assistant vice-president of the department in 1962. He retired from State Farm in 1975 and passed away in 1985.

Scope

The Holder collection consists primarily of materials from John's time of service in the U.S. Navy from 1942 to 1945. The collection is in one small box which contains nine folders. Folder one contains two copies of John's obituary that was printed in the *Pantagraph*. Folder two contains material related to John's training school experiences. Folder three contains material related to John's deployment on the MS Weltevreden. Folder four contains material related to John's service on the SS McClintock. Folder five contains material related to John's service on the LST 807. Folder six contains material related to John's service on the LST 213. Folder seven contains material related to John's military travel during WWII. Folder eight contains two WWII newspapers. Folder nine contains material related to John's military discharge.

Box and Folder Inventory

Folder 1: General

- 1.1 Obituary, *Pantagraph*, 17 December 1985. (Added by staff in 2013) (2 copies).

Folder 2: Training School

- 2.1 Setting arrangement list for Armed Guard class at Naval Training School at Treasure Island, San Francisco, California, June 9, 1942. 1 page.
- 2.2 Four charts, double-sided, for different training exercises, undated. 4 pages.
- 2.3 "40 MM Operating Cycle", guide to the firing of 40 MM gun, undated. 1 page, double-sided.
- 2.4 Handout of different military songs, undated. 2 pages.
- 2.5 Program for "Up Anchor with the Armed Guard", June 11, 1942.

Folder 3: MS Weltevreden

- 3.1 Copy of Order to Lieutenant John D. Holder to be Commander of the Armed Guard unit of the SS Weltevreden, July 19, 1942. 1 page.
- 3.2 List of U.S. Naval Personnel assigned to MS Weltevreden, February 20, 1943. 1 page. 2 copies.
- 3.3 Watch Quarter and Station Bill for the MS Weltevreden, undated. 1 page.
- 3.4 General Instructions in case of alarm for the MS Weltevreden, undated. 1 page.
- 3.5 Envelope containing letter from J.M. van Driest requesting that J.D. Holder with his armed guard remain on board the MS Weltevreden, October 19, 1942. 1 page.
- 3.6 Program for Happy Hour on August 2, 1942 on the MS Weltevreden, 1 page.
- 3.7 Program for Happy Hour on August 9, 1942 on the MS Weltevreden, 1 page.

- 3.8 Handwritten program for Happy Hour on August 9, 1942 on the MS Weltevreden, 1 page.
- 3.9 Program for Happy Hour on October 4, 1942 on the MS Weltevreden, 1 page.
- 3.10 Program for Happy Hour on October 11, 1942 on the MS Weltevreden, 1 page.
- 3.11 Program for Happy Hour on November 8, 1942 on the MS Weltevreden, 2 pages.
- 3.12 Typed account of Happy Hour of August 9, 1942 on MS Weltevreden, 2 pages.
- 3.13 Typed account of Happy Hour of August 19, 1942 on MS Weltevreden, 2 pages.
- 3.14 Cablegram to Roy Bush, Wellington, New Zealand, undated. 1 page.
- 3.15 Translation guide for English to Dutch or Romanized Malay, undated. 21 pages, most are double-sided.
- 3.16 Plastic sleeve containing postcard and postcard series from New Caledonia.
- 3.17 Plastic sleeve containing two ship official passes, one baggage claim check, and one envelope with a letter to John Holder.
- 3.18 Seven unaddressed postcards from Java, Sumatra, Rotterdamsche Lloyd.
- 3.19 Seven menu cards from MS Weltevreden.
- 3.20 A sheet with two attached menu cards from Rotterdamsche Lloyd, Sumatra
- 3.21 A sheet with one attached menu card from Rotterdamsche Lloyd, Sumatra, and on back of sheet is envelope with several order slips for food and beverages.

Folder 4: SS McClintock

- 4.1 Inspection Memo to Lieutenant J.D. Holder of SS McClintock, August 28, 1943. 1 page.
- 4.2 Roster of SS McClintock, August 20, 1943. 1 page.
- 4.3 Watch and Station Bill for Armed Guard Unit for SS McClintock, undated. 1 page.
- 4.4 Watch and Station Bill for Armed Guard Unit for SS McClintock, undated. 1 page.
- 4.5 Inspection Memo to Mr. Holder, Commander of Armed Guard Unit for SS McClintock, 10-12-1943. 1 page.
- 4.6 Sheet on Lt. John D. Holder admission to the Doman of Neptunus Rex for the SS McClintock. 1 page.

Folder 5: LST 807

- 5.1 Plastic sleeve containing photo from the *Honolulu Advertiser* of the American Red Cross canteen at Waikiki, March 28, 1945.
- 5.2 Plastic sleeve containing postcard of an Officer's Club and a photo of LSTs landing on Iwo Jima's beach (LST 807 is in picture).
- 5.3 Plastic sleeve containing menu for Christmas Dinner for the LST 807 at Pearl Harbor in 1944.
- 5.4 Photo of newly commissioned LST 807 heading down Mississippi River. (added by staff in 2013)
- 5.5 Photo of Marines unloading supplies from LSTs, including LST 807, at Iwo Jima beach. (added by staff in 2013)
- 5.6 Photo of LST 807 at Iwo Jima beach on the day of the famous flag-raising ceremony at Iwo Jima. (added by staff in 2013)

Folder 6: LST 213

- 6.1 Photo of LST 213
- 6.2 Blueprint of LST 213
- 6.3 Navigational chart to steer LST 213 around typhoon, Oct. 8-10, 1945. 1 page.
- 6.4 Page on typhoon track, Oct. 5-10, 1945. 1 page.

Folder 7: Military Travel

- 7.1 Travel log for 1942 to 1945, 2 pages.
- 7.2 Plastic sheet including show passes and officer's club cards.
- 7.3 Plastic sleeve containing envelope with letter to John Holder, Dec. 8, 1942.
- 7.4 Plastic sleeve containing two officer's club cards.
- 7.5 Personal letter to John Holder from R.L. Harvey, November 5, 1943. 1 page.

Folder 8: WWII Newspapers

- 8.1 Copy of the Saipan Beacon, August 29, 1945.
- 8.2 Copy of the Shanghai Evening Post, August 26, 1943.

Folder 9: Military Discharge

- 9.1 Certificate of Demobilization Factors, October 31, 1945. 1 page.
- 9.2 Certificate of Satisfactory Service from President of the United States signed by the Secretary of the Navy, December 4, 1945. 1 page.
- 9.3 Memo on Relief of Duty, November 15, 1945. 1 page. 2 copies.
- 9.4 Memo requesting detachment and release from active duty, November 17, 1945. 1 page.
- 9.5 Memo on additional information for relief of command of LST 213, November 17, 1945. 1 page.
- 9.6 Memo on release from active duty with first and second endorsement forms, November 17, 1945. 5 pages.
- 9.7 Endorsement form for release from active duty, December 4, 1945. 4 pages.
- 9.8 Instructions from Separation Center, undated. 1 quarter page and 2 full pages.
- 9.9 Mileage Voucher, December 4, 1945. 1 page.
- 9.10 Notice of separation from the U.S. Naval Service, February 28, 1946.
- 9.11 Dispatch from James Forrestal, Secretary of Navy to LST 213. 2 pages.
- 9.12 Envelope to hold official records from War-Navy Departments.