

DWIGHT D. EISENHOWER LIBRARY
ABILENE, KANSAS

OUTERBRIDGE, WILLIAM W.: Papers, 1923-69

Accessions 70-28 & 71-24
Processed by: BSR
Date Completed: August 1970

The papers of William W. Outerbridge were deposited in the Dwight D. Eisenhower Library by Admiral Outerbridge in August 1969. An accretion was received from the First Shot Naval Vets of St. Paul, Minnesota, in August 1970.

Linear feet: 4.5
Approximate number of pages: 8850
Approximate number of items: 3000

Admiral Outerbridge signed an instrument of gift for the papers on August 12, 1969. Literary rights in the writings of William W. Outerbridge in this collection and in all other collections of papers donated to the Eisenhower Library were retained by Admiral Outerbridge until his death in September 1986, and then passed to the public. Under terms of the instrument of gift, the following classes of items are withheld from research use:

1. Papers relating to the family and private business affairs of William W. Outerbridge.
2. Papers relating to the family and private business affairs of others persons who have had correspondence with William W. Outerbridge.
3. Papers relating to investigations of individuals or to appointments and personnel matters.
4. Papers containing statements made by or to the donor in confidence unless in the judgement of the Director of the Dwight D. Eisenhower Library the reason for the confidentiality no longer exists.

All other papers which contain information or statements that might be used to injure, harass, or damage any living person.

SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

William W. Outerbridge was born in 1906 and graduated from the U.S. Naval Academy in 1927. For the next several years he held a variety of naval positions on ships and ashore. In 1941 he became commander of the destroyer USS Ward based at Pearl Harbor. Early on the morning of December 7, 1941, the Ward, while on patrol near Hawaii, discovered a Japanese submarine that was attempting to sneak into Pearl Harbor. The Ward opened fire with one of the deck guns and sank the sub. This happened just a few hours before Japanese forces commenced their attack on Pearl Harbor. The action by the Ward crew was widely considered to be the first naval action by U.S. forces in World War II. A plaque commemorating the event was placed on the Ward's deck gun in 1958.

Outerbridge was transferred to the USS O'Brien in 1944 and took up a station near England. On D-Day the O'Brien stood off the coast of Normandy and helped protect Allied forces landing in Normandy by using its guns to attack German defenses near the beach. A few days later the O'Brien performed a similar action at the French port of Cherbourg, which helped Allied forces capture the city.

Following World War II Outerbridge continued his naval service in a variety of positions, including commander of the cruiser USS Los Angeles from 1953 to 1955. He retired in 1957 with the rank of Rear Admiral, and died in 1986.

The papers of William Outerbridge were received at the Eisenhower Library in two shipments. The bulk of the collection was donated by Admiral Outerbridge in August 1969. This contains extensive correspondence and subject files covering his entire naval career. His service on the Ward, the O'Brien and the Los Angeles is especially well documented. There are also a few files on his service in China in the late 1930s.

A small accretion to the collection was received from the First Shot Naval Vets of St. Paul, Minnesota in August 1970. This was a private organization of naval veterans who had been at Pearl Harbor and they had collected extensive material on the attack of December 7, 1941. Outerbridge gave them most of his files about the attack on the USS Ward. The organization loaned to the Eisenhower Library the files they had obtained from Outerbridge. The original papers were returned to the organization after being copied by the Library staff. This accretion contains information on the history of the Ward, official correspondence and reports about the attack on the Japanese submarine, and the dedication of the plaque on the deck gun in 1958.

CHRONOLOGY

- 1906 April 14 Born, Victoria, Hong Kong, China
- 1923-27 Attended the U.S. Naval Academy
- 1928 December 15 Married Grace Fulwood (3 sons: William, 7/20/30; Thomas, 1/16/33; and Robert, 9/8/36)
- 1928-40 Served in various capacities on ships and ashore, including 3 1/2 years on the China station (1937-40) aboard the USS Augusta
- 1940-41 Executive Officer, destroyer USS Cummings
- 1941-42 Commanding Officer, destroyer USS Ward
- 1942-43 Office of the Chief of Naval Transportation, Washington, DC
- 1943-45 Commanding Officer, destroyer USS O'Brien
- 1945-46 Commander, Destroyer Division Forty-Two
- 1946-49 Staff, Naval War College
- 1949-50 Commander, Destroyer Squadron Four
- 1950-51 Chief of Staff and Aide to Commander, Destroyer Flotilla Four
- 1951-52 Staff, Industrial College of the Armed Forces
- 1952-53 Assistant Chief of Staff for Plans, Operations and Intelligence, Naval Forces, Far East
- 1953-55 Commanding Officer, cruiser USS Los Angeles
- 1955-57 Head, Transportation & Petroleum Branch, Office of the Chief of Naval Operations (Logistics, Plans)
- 1957 Retired, promoted to Rear Admiral
- 1986 September Died, Tifton, Georgia

CONTAINER LIST

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4	<p>Letters from WWO to his wife, <u>USS O'Brien</u>, Jan.-Apr. 1945</p> <p>Occupation Currency, Japan and the Philippines, 1945</p> <p>Official Papers, <u>USS O'Brien</u>, Misc. temporary duties, and <u>USS Vogelgesang</u>, 1945</p> <p>Personal Correspondence, 1945</p> <p>Senate Military Affairs Committee, copies of statements made before the [Oct 1945 testimony re unification of the armed services and national defense by Admiral Ernest J. King, General Alexander A. Vandegrift and Secretary of the Navy James Forrestal]</p>

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5	<p>Official Papers, Naval War College, 1948</p> <p>Miscellaneous memorabilia, 1948</p> <p>Official Papers, Change of Duty from Naval War College to Commander, Destroyer Division Forty-One, 1949</p> <p>Official Papers, Commander, Destroyer Squadron Four, U.S. Atlantic Fleet, <u>USS Gearing</u> flagship, 1949</p> <p>Personal Correspondence, 1949</p> <p>Official Papers, Commander, Destroyer Squadron Four with additional duties as Commander, Destroyer Division Forty-One, Jan.-June 1950</p> <p>Official Papers, Change of Duty from Commander, Destroyer Squadron Four to Chief of Staff, Destroyer Flotilla Four, June 1950</p> <p>Official Papers, Chief of Staff, Destroyer Flotilla Four, <u>USS Sierra</u> flagship, June-Dec. 1950</p> <p>Personal Correspondence, 1950</p> <p>Official Papers, Chief of Staff, Destroyer Flotilla Four, Correspondence, Jan.-June 1951</p> <p>Official Papers, Change of Duty from Chief of Staff, Destroyer Flotilla Four to Industrial College of the Armed Forces, Aug. 1951</p> <p>Financial Records, 1951</p>

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11 (package)	Poster - "R/Adm. William Woodward Outerbridge, 1927-57" [on retirement] Poster - Destroyer Flotilla Four Posters - Destroyer Squadron Four Miscellaneous oversized materials
12	Material from First Shot Naval Vets (A71-24) Cover letters on the collection History of the <u>USS Ward</u> Log, <u>USS Ward</u> , 7 December 1941 Messages not sent, <u>USS Ward</u> , 7 December 1941 Statements concerning the attack, 7 December 1941 (1)(2) Summary of Attacks, <u>USS Ward</u> , 7-17 December 1941; C.O., <u>USS Allen</u> Report, 3 January 1942 C.O., <u>USS Ward</u> , Report with forwarding endorsements by CDD 80 and ComInPat List of Officers and Crew, <u>USS Ward</u> , December 1941 Miscellaneous correspondence concerning the <u>USS Ward</u> Address by Rear Admiral Forrestel at dedication of the Honor Gun, 9 May 1958

END OF CONTAINER LIST