Register of the Nimitz (Chester W.) Collection, 1885-1962

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Collection number: Mss144

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Contact Information
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Biography
Chester William Nimitz (1885-1966) was Commander-in-Chief of the U.S. Pacific Fleet during World War II. At the age of 15 he received a congressional appointment to the U.S. Naval Academy from which he graduated with distinction in 1905. After two years of duty in the U.S. Asiatic Fleet, Nimitz was sent to the Philippines, where he commanded a gunboat, and later a destroyer. When the destroyer ran aground, Nimitz was court-martialed and found guilty, but was let off with a reprimand. Returning to the U.S. in 1908 he commanded a succession of submarines and became an expert on diesel engines and undersea warfare. During World War I, Nimitz was Chief of Staff to the Commander of the Submarine Force, U.S. Atlantic Fleet. Following the War he organized the Naval Reserve Officers' Training Corps at the University of California, was Assistant Chief at the Bureau of Navigation and commanded a battleship division. In 1938 he was promoted to Rear Admiral.
When the Japanese raided Pearl Harbor on Dec. 7, 1941, Nimitz was chief of the Bureau of Navigation. Called frequently into consultation during the next few days by the Secretary of the Navy, he was appointed Admiral in command the U.S. Pacific Fleet, and, in 1942, he was also appointed Commander-in-Chief of the Pacific Ocean Area. By 1943, Nimitz, exploiting his growing amphibious and carrier strength, opened a new, shorter line of advance in the Central Pacific. After capturing Japanese positions in the Gilberts, the Marshalls, the Marianas and the Palaus, Nimitz' forces supported Gen. Douglas MacArthur's forces in their re-conquest of the Philippines. The U.S. Pacific Fleet in the Battle of the Philippine Sea (June 1944) and the Battle for Leyte Gulf (October 1944) further reduced the Japanese Navy until, in 1945, Nimitz' forces captured Iwo Jima and Okinawa and his carriers began to raid Japan. On September 2, aboard the battleship Missouri in Tokyo Bay, Nimitz was a signer of the instrument of Japanese surrender. An expert judge of men, Nimitz gave the officers under him as little interference as possible. His tact and serenity were proverbial. Confident in himself, he inspired confidence in others.

Following World War II, Admiral Nimitz became Chief of Naval Operations and was instrumental in unifying the armed services under the National Military Establishment, forerunner of the Department of Defense. Nimitz retired from active service on Dec. 16, 1947, but in 1949 he was named by the United Nations to be administrator of a plebiscite designed to settle the dispute between India and Pakistan in Kashmir. Admiral Nimitz took up residence in California, first at Berkeley, where he served as a regent of the University of California (1947-1955) and later at official quarters on Treasure Island in San Francisco Bay. He died there on Feb. 20, 1966.

**Scope and Content**

Transcript copies of correspondence, orders, reports, speeches (1943-1948), and press clippings. Speeches also on microfilm. CINCPAC (Comander in Chief of the Pacific Fleet) reports from Nimitz on operations and battles. Includes 79 photographs (1885-1957) of Nimitz' career and signed photographs of Navy ships.

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**BOX 1: NIMITZ COLLECTION, 1862-1965**

1.1—BIOGRAPHICAL MATERIALS
- Encyclopedia articles on Nimitz.
- Address label to Dr. Robert E. Burns, President, University of the Pacific, from Navy Department.
- Photostats of correspondence to Eller from Nimitz, autobiographical letters on career.
  - 3-11-62 [3 pp.]
  - 8-62 [4 pp.]
  - 8-17-62 [5 pp.]
  - 8-18-62 [1 p.]
  - 8-20-62 [9 pp.]

1.2: NIMITZ SPEECHES, 1942-1960 [microfilm]

1.3: FLEET ADMIRAL C.W. NIMITZ BIOGRAPHICAL MATERIALS, IN 3 PARTS [I. Speeches (1943-48); II. Press clippings (1942-50) ; III. Miscellaneous (1907-59)]
- I:1. Address by Admiral C.W. Nimitz, 9 May 1943 at Governor I.M. Stainback's "Work to Win" Rally in Honolulu Stadium
- I:2. Statement made on board HMS Victorius at Pearl Harbor, July 1944
- I:3. Broadcast on 30 July 1944 congratulating WAVES on their second Birthday.
- I:4. Speech to Boy Scouts of America at St. Louis, Missouri, 17 May 1946
- I:5. Speech before Philosophical Society of Texas at Baker Hotel, Dallas, Texas 7 Dec. 1946
-II:2. "Battle of Solomon Islands Third Victory for Nimitz" U.P. Headquarters, U.S. Pacific Fleet, Pearl Harbor, 18 August 1942 by Frank Tremaine
-II:3. "Chester Nimitz Day Observed in Admiral's Home Town in Texas" A.P., Fredericksburg, Texas 27 December 1942
-II:6. "Nimitz to Quit as Navy Chief Dec. 15" A.P. Washington, October 14, 1947, Wilkes-Barre Record
-II:9. The Times-Picayune editorial 18, October 1947
-II:11. San Francisco Chronicle editorial 11 Jan. 1950 "Friends in History and the UN"
-III:1. Commission as ensign in the Navy, signed by President Theodore Roosevelt, 11 March 1907 (copy poor)
-III:2. U.S. Pacific Fleet and Pacific Ocean Areas Communiqué, No. 3, 6 June 1942, "The Battle of Midway"
-III:4. Press Conference at Pearl Harbor, 1 January 1945, Admiral Nimitz reviews the accomplishments of 1944 with satisfaction and looks forward to 1945 with confidence.

1.4 OPERATIONS FILE, 1942-1945
-1. CINCPAC serial 01704 of 17 June 1942. First endorsement to Task Force 17 serial 0010N of 27 May 1942. Subject: The Battle of Coral Sea, 4-8 May 1942
-2. CINCPAC serial 01849 of 28 June 1942. Subject: The Battle of Midway 3-6 June 1942

-4. CINCPAC serial 03102 of 24 October 1942. Subject: The Solomon Islands Campaign; Battle of the Eastern Solomons, 23-25 August 1942

-5. CINCPAC serial 00413 of 6 January 1943. Subject: The Battle of Santa Cruz, 26 October 1942

-6. CINCPAC serial 00599 of 9 March 1943. Subject: The Solomon Islands Campaign; From the Fourth Battle of Savo, 20 Nov. 1942 to the Munda Bombardment, 4-5 Jan. 1943.

-7. CINCPAC serial 00546 of 15 Feb. 1943. Subject: The Solomon Islands Campaign; the Fifth Battle of Savo, 30 Nov. 1942.


-10 CINCPAC serial 003975 of 27 August 1945. Subject; Operations in Pacific Ocean Areas, Feb. 1945, Iwo Jima Operations, 16 Feb-16 March 1945


1. 5: PHOTOGRAPHS, 1885-1930 [Copy prints of Official U.S. Navy Photographs released courtesy of the Naval History Division, Office of the Chief of Naval Operations. All labelled NR&L(MOD) with number. "CWN" used for Chester William Nimitz]

-33235 Baby picture of CWN, 1885 in Fredricksburg, Texas.

-(No number) Midshipman of 1901-1904. CWN; George V. Stewart, Capt., who retired in 1940; and Royal E. Ingersoll, Admiral.

-(OLD 21000) CWN, midshipman, 1905

-32722 Capt. CWN chats with Admiral Frank B. Upsham and an un-identified Colonel who was a pilot, date about 1925

1.6: PHOTOGRAPHS, 1930-1939

-32778 Inspection of a Light Cruiser Division, 1938. Rear Adm. H.R. Stark USN, Rear Adm. J.C. Townsen USN and Rear Adm. CWN. This was CWN’s first command as an Admiral.

-32792 Rear Admiral CWN, USN reads his orders detaching him from duty as Commander Battleship Division One in a change-of-command ceremony on boards USS Arizona at San Pedro, Calif., 28 May 1939. His successor is Rear Admiral Russell Willson.


-32800 Rear Admiral Chester W. Nimitz, USN, Chief of the Bureau of Navigation, visits Rear Admiral John Downes USN, Commandant Ninth Naval District at Great Lakes ...between 1939 to 1941.

1.7: PHOTOGRAPHS, 1940-1945

-27134 Adm. CWN relieves Adm. H.E. Kimmel, in a Change of Command ceremony, as Commander in Chief Pacific Fleet, 31 Dec. 1941, 24 days after the attack on Pearl Harbor. Pearl Harbor, Hawaii.

-32701 Adm. C.W. Nimitz, Cincpac, visits Midway Island late in June 1942 after the battle. Admiral leaving a shelter.

-32808 Admiral Chester W. Nimitz, USN. Cincpac, inspects the Naval housing for Civilian Defense Workers at Pearl Harbor, T.F., 8 April 1943...

-32928 CWN is photographed with Admiral Ernest J. King, Cominch, aboard a ship in the Pacific about, 1943...

-32848 Ambassador Joseph Clark Grew visits Admiral CWN at Pearl Harbor, 1944... to go aboard USS Saratoga.
-32681 ADM. CWN, Cincpac-poa, talks to some British survivors, about 1944. Capt. Tuffnell RN looks on.
-32938 President Franklin D. Roosevelt visits Pearl Harbor, 26 July 1944. On board Birmingham with General Douglas MacArthur and Admiral Chester W. Nimitz.
-32739 Adm. CWN with Adm. E.J. King and Adm. R.A. Spruance on board USS Indianapolis, July 1944.
-32718 Adm. C.W. Nimitz USN and Adm. R.A. Spruance UN leave USS Indianapolis to go ashore at Guam shortly after its recapture, 11 Aug. 1944.
-32902 CWN presents Medal Awards at the U.S. Naval Hospital at Aiea, Oahu, T.H. during World War II. no date
-32780 Fleet Adm. CWN with Mr. Roy Wilson Howard of the Scripps-Howard Newspaper syndicate at Guam, 1945.
-32853 Fleet Admiral CWN with daughter Mary, Admiral John D. McDonald USN and Mrs. Nimitz, July 1945.
-32828 Fleet Admiral C.W. Nimitz, Cincpac, is photographed on steps of Iolani Palace Honolulu, after Navy Day Ceremonies during which he was made Honorary High Chief of Hawaii, 27 Oct. 1945, day declared Nimitz Day.
-32885 Fleet Admiral CWN and Robert E. Sherwood try their luck off Guam, 1945.
-32671 Fleet Adm. CWN leaves H.M.S. Duke of York in Apra Harbor, Guam in 1945 having just received from Adm. Sir Bruce Fraser, RN, C-in-C British Pacific Fleet, the order of Knights Grand Cross of the Bath (GCB) awarded by King George VI.

1.8: PHOTOGRAPHS,1946-1957
-32856 Fleet Admiral Chester W. Nimitz, Chief of Naval Operations, attends a meeting of the Gold Star Mothers in San Bernardino, Cal. in 1946...
-32775 Fleet Adm. CWN with unidentified Marine at the Cal. Acad. of Sciences at SF, ca. 1947.
-32713 Fleet Adm. CWN lands at San Antonio, Texas for the San Jacinto Carnival, April 1948.
-32754 Fleet Adm. CWN address the Pacific Coast Regional Navy Industrial Associations first annual dinner at the St. Francis Hotel in San Francisco, 14 Sept. 1948. In honor of W. John Kenney, Under Secretary of the Navy.
-32397 CWN, U.S. War-Time Commander in-Chief of the Pacific Fleet, just appointed Plebiscite Administrator for Jammu-Kashmir, at map in office of U.N. Secretary-General Trygve Lie, the area which will be the first to hold a free and impartial plebiscite under U.N. auspices, the purpose is the vote is to determine whether the princely state of Jammu-Kashmir should join India or Pakistan, Looking on is Mr. Lie, Lake Success, New York 28 March 1949.
-32767 American War Correspondents Association presents honorary membership certificates to prominent military personnel at a supper at Hotel Pierre, New York, 25 Jan. 1950. Rear Adm. W.S. DeLany USN, Commandant of the Third Naval District; General C.B. Cates USM, Commandant of the Marine Corps; Admiral Forrest Sherman USN, Chief of Naval Operations; Fleet Admiral Chester W. Mimitz, USN.
-32804 Admiral Forrest Sherman, USN, Chief of Naval Operations, congratulates Captain P.H. Lyon USN Commanding Officer of the Navy's latest aircraft carrier... 25 Sept. 1950, Fleet Admiral C.W.w. Nimitz, USN, left looks on,
-32887 After the recommissioning ceremonies of USS Essex on 22 Jan 1951... Fleet Admiral CWN, Vice Admiral George D Murray, USN, Commander Western Sea Frontier and Read Admiral Daniel E. Barbayu USN, Commandant Thirteenth Naval District.
-32784 Fleet Adm. & Mrs. CWN admire the flag of the United Nations at the Dallas State Fair, Dallas, Texas, 1957.
-32786 Fleet Adm. CWN admires the DeWeldon bust of him at Dallas State Fair, Dallas, Texas 1957.
-32791 Admiral CWN in front of display of CWN's personal sword collection at the Claremont Hotel, San Diego, Cal, ca 1957.
-32812 Fleet Admiral C.W. Nimitz USN is welcomed aboard a U.S. ship by Vice Admiral Robert L. Dennison...13 June 1957.

1.9: UNDATED PHOTOGRAPHS
-First Fleet Adm. CWN who inaugurated the Pistol Matches in 1933 with the late Frank McCue, pistol commissioner of the Olympic Club, poses with CWO Offutt Pinion Referee and Chief Bosn. Russell L. Ludwig, came in 2nd on the Navy team, pose with awards...
-32921 CWN strikes a pose with his young dog.
-31344 Fleet Admiral and Mrs. CWN viewing his portrait

1.10: PHOTOGRAPHS OF SHIPS
-(No number) USS Texas
-(No number) South Dakota
-(No number) USS Tonopah
-33150 USS Nina Tug (1865-1910)
-33151 USS Menhaden
-33153 USS Decatur
-33154 USS Panay (1899-1914) Unisan Islets, ...to Guimaras Straits, illustration
-33155 USS Chesapeake
-33156 USS Nina Tug (1865-1910) newspaper photo Feb. 12, 1910
-33157 Narwhal, U.S.
-33158 Aerial oblique of the USS Augusta
-33159 USS Holland, period of service 1926-1953
-33160 USS Grayling, U.S. Navy Submarine
-33161 Skip Jack
-33162 USS Bass, Aug. 1935
-33163 USS Massachusetts, 24 Nov 1944
-33164 USS Hartford
-33165 USS Ohio
-33166 USS Argonne Submarine Tender (2 copies)

1.11: MORE PHOTOGRAPHS OF SHIPS
-33667 USS Indiana
-33168 USS Baltimore, 1898
-33169 USS Castine
-33170 USS Chicago, Protective Cruiser
-33170 USS Massachusetts 1896-1920
-33171 USS Missouri firing a 16 inch salvo at Chong Jin, Korea in efforts to cut Northern Korean Communications. Chong Jun is 39 miles from Soviet border
-33172 USS Seattle at Honolulu
-33173 USS Snapper
-33174 South Carolina
-33175 USS Maumee
-33176 USS Denver, Oct. 7, 1904
-33178 USS Arizona
-33179 USS Rigel
-33180 USS Plunger, commissioned 25 Feb 1907, stricken, 24 Feb 1913
-33182 USS Ranger
-33183 USS Talbot
-33184 USS California
-33185 USS Trenton, in Gulf of Panama, 1943