

Collection #
M 0788,
F 1697

HOWARD R. MEEKER, JR. LETTERS, 1943–1946

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Processed by

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Indianapolis, IN 46202-3269

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COLLECTION INFORMATION

VOLUME OF COLLECTION:	1 manuscript box, 1 reel of microfilm
COLLECTION DATES:	1943–46
PROVENANCE:	Howard R. Meeker, Jr., 9797 Ditch Road, Carmel, Indiana

46032, 18 July 2002

RESTRICTIONS: None

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ALTERNATE FORMATS:

RELATED HOLDINGS:

ACCESSION NUMBER: 2002.0652

NOTES:

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Howard R. (Bob) Meeker, Jr. (1924–) was born in Indianapolis. He graduated from Shortridge High School and started college at Purdue University before entering the Army in June 1943. After completing basic training at Camp Wheeler, Georgia, Meeker attended the University of Alabama A.S.T.P. (Army Specialized Training Program) from September 1943 to March 1944 and entered the Engineer Unit Training Center at Camp Claiborne, Louisiana.

Upon completing engineering training he was shipped to the Pacific Theater and served in Hollandia, New Guinea, the Philippines, and Yokohama, Japan before being discharged in February 1946. After the war, Meeker returned to Purdue and received his degree in 1948. In June 1949, he married Mary Jane Coleman and they had four children.

After graduation from Purdue, he was employed by the Pure Oil Company in Chicago, and then worked in industrial purchasing for the Link Belt Company in Indianapolis from 1962–67. Meeker then served as a stock broker for City Securities until he helped create Traub and Company, from which he retired in 1988.

Sources:

The Service Club of Indianapolis Yearbook, 2001.

SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

The collection consists of typed transcriptions of letters from Howard R. (Bob) Meeker, Jr., while serving in the United States Army to his parents in Indianapolis, June 1943–January 1946. Meeker transcribed these letters and discarded the originals in the 1960s, although photographs, postcards, and various other printed items were retained.

The letters begin on 1 June 1943 with Meeker at Ft. Benjamin Harrison and continue through his basic training at Camp Wheeler, Georgia, A.S.T.P. (Army Specialized Training Program) at the University of Alabama, and training with the 1383rd Engineers Petroleum Distribution Company at Camp Claiborne, Louisiana.

Items contained in the letters include descriptions of basic training, army life, the differences in treatment between basic training and A.S.T.P., classes at the University of Alabama, anticipation of assignments, free-time activities, and commentary regarding news from home. Meeker also relays how fortunate he feels being assigned to the engineers while most of his A.S.T.P. class went into the infantry.

Letters written after Meeker's training (September 1944–January 1946) describe his ship voyage across the Pacific Ocean, the censorship problem in communicating, descriptions of his everyday duties of emptying tankers at undisclosed ports (later locations included New Guinea and the Philippines), comments about news from the letters he received, and leisure time activities. The tone and information contained in his letters after censorship was removed in September 1945 are more open and frank. Subjects discussed are his views on General MacArthur, being part of the force occupying Yokohama, Japan, the conditions of the country and the Japanese people, Purdue University football, and his longing to return home.

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Microfilm of collection

CONTAINER

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CATALOGING INFORMATION

For additional information on this collection, including a list of subject headings that may lead you to related materials:

1. Go to the Indiana Historical Society's online catalog: <http://157.91.92.2/>
2. Click on the "Basic Search" icon.
3. Select "Call Number" from the "Search In:" box.
4. Search for the collection by its basic call number (in this case, M 0788).
5. When you find the collection, go to the "Full Record" screen for a list of headings that can be searched for related materials.