

Julian C. Smith

A Register of His Papers in the Archives Branch



Archives Branch

Marine Corps History Division

Quantico, VA

2012

Introduction

The Archives Branch supports the professional military education requirements of Marine Corps residential and distance learning programs. The Archives is the chief repository for reporting units, as well as for the personal papers of current and veteran Marines. The Archives is open without appointment to both military and civilian patrons. Patrons may bring laptops, digital cameras, and scanners for personal use.

The Archives Branch is located at 2044 Broadway Street, Quantico, VA 22134

Phone: (703) 784-4685. Email: mcu_archives@usmcu.edu

Collection Summary

Title: Papers of Julian C. Smith

Collection Number: COLL/202

Physical Characteristics: 29 standard legal size document boxes; 12 linear feet

Span Dates: 1892-1976

Language: English

Creator: Julian C. Smith, 1885-1975

Administrative Information

Restrictions: Collection is open to all researchers

Preferred citation: Researchers wishing to cite this collection should include the following information:

Julian C. Smith Collection, COLL/202, [Folder heading], Archives Branch, Marine Corps History Division, Quantico, VA

Provenance: The majority of the Julian C. Smith Papers were donated by Julian Smith during the 1970s. Following Smith's death in 1975, his wife, Harriotte Smith continued to donate items through 1979. The papers were transferred from the Historical Branch to the Archives and Special Collections at Quantico in 1999.

Biographical Sketch

Julian Constable Smith was born in Elkton, Maryland on 11 September 1885. He received his appointment as a Second Lieutenant in January 1909, and underwent his basic training as a Marine officer at the Marine Barracks, Port Royal, South Carolina. Following his promotion to First Lieutenant in September 1912, he was ordered to the Marine Barracks at the Philadelphia Navy Yard, and in December of the following year, he was transferred to Panama, remaining

there until January 1914. As a member of an expeditionary force, he departed from Panama to take part in the occupation of Vera Cruz, Mexico, from April to December 1914.

Upon returning to the United States, he again was ordered to Philadelphia, this time as a member of the 1st Brigade of Marines. In August 1915, he began a tour of expeditionary duty in Haiti, and in April 1916, was transferred to Santo Domingo with the 2d Battalion, 1st Marines. In December of the same year, he was ordered back to the Philadelphia Navy Yard, this time, to serve with the Advanced Base Force there.

Following his promotion to Captain in March 1917, the Smith was ordered to a course of instruction at the Naval War College in Newport, Rhode Island, and several months later he was assigned to Quantico, Virginia, as an instructor in the Marine Officers' Training Camps. In the early part of 1919, he sailed for Cuba in command of a machine gun battalion. After his service there, he returned to the Navy Yard at Philadelphia, and a short time later was transferred to Headquarters Marine Corps, Washington, DC.

In August 1920, General Smith again assumed duties at Quantico, and in July of the following year, he was ordered to sea duty on the staff of the Commander, Scouting Fleet. Two years later, he again returned to Washington, this time to serve in the office of the Chief Coordinator, Bureau of the Budget. He left Washington to enter the Army Command and General Staff School, Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, and after graduation in 1928, was again ordered to Marine Corps Headquarters. He captained the Marine Corps Rifle and Pistol Team Squad, for the year of 1928, while detached to temporary duty at Quantico, and also headed the 1930 squad.

The general's next assignment at Corinto, Nicaragua, where he began a three-year tour of expeditionary duty in August 1930. Following that, he returned to Quantico, where he was appointed to the rank of Lieutenant Colonel. Then, after another short tour of duty in Philadelphia, he returned to Marine Corps Headquarters for duty with the Division of Operations and Training. With his promotion to Colonel, he was named Director of Personnel.

In June 1938, General Smith became Commanding Officer, 5th Marines, 1st Marine Brigade, at Quantico, where he remained until his promotion to Brigadier General. He was then ordered to London, where he served with the Naval Attaché, American Embassy, as a Naval Observer. He returned to the United States in August 1941, and again reported to Quantico. Upon appointment to Major General in October 1942, he assumed command of the Fleet Marine Force Training Schools at New River, North Carolina. He took command of the 2d Marine Division in May 1943 which he led during the assault on Tarawa. He remained in this capacity until April of the following year, when he was named Commanding General, Expeditionary Troops, Third Fleet.

In December 1944, General Smith took command of the Department of the Pacific, with headquarters in San Francisco, California. From there, he was ordered to Parris Island, South Carolina, where he commanded the Marine Corps Recruit Depot from February 1946, until his retirement. Julian Smith died on 5 November 1975 and was buried at Arlington National Cemetery.

Scope and Content Note

The Papers of Julian C. Smith consist of materials relating mainly to his career with the Marine Corps and his position as Commanding General of the 2d Marine Division on Tarawa during World War II. The dates of the collection range from 1892-1976.

Prior to World War II, the collection contains papers related to Smith's service in Nicaragua including copies of *The Guardia Nacional de Nicaragua*, a history of the Marines in Nicaragua during the 1920s and 1930s, written by Smith; and Guardia newsletters and newspaper clippings. Also during this time frame, Smith was involved in many Marine Corps exercises. The collection contains maps, instructions, and reports on the outcome of exercises held at Culebra and Vieques, Puerto Rico; Cuba; and Quantico, Virginia.

Official records from World War II include those related to the 2d Marine Division's actions on Tarawa. Included are Operation Plans, orders, memoranda, studies, and casualty lists. Also included are planning records for Operation Stalemate, the landing on Peleliu.

Julian Smith's correspondence covers two series in this collection. Included is incoming and outgoing, official and personal. Of note are letters between Julian Smith and Alexander Vandegrift and Holland Smith.

The last series in this collection consists of material belonging to Harriotte Smith, Julian Smith's wife. Prior to her marriage to Julian Smith, Harriotte was married to William Byrd, a Marine pilot who was killed in an airplane crash in Nicaragua. The bulk of this portion of the collection consists of correspondence between Harriotte and Julian. Of note are his letters describing the actions of Marines on Tarawa and his candid remarks about other Marine Corps personalities that he shared with his wife. There is also correspondence between Harriotte and William Byrd and photographs and newspaper articles related to his death.

Six boxes contain photographs collected by Smith. The bulk of these images are official Marine Corps photographs taken on Tarawa and from other Marine Corps engagements in the Pacific.

List of Series

- Series 1. Nicaragua
- Series 2. Exercises
- Series 3. Official Records
- Series 4. World War II, Tarawa and Peleliu
- Series 5. Subject Files
- Series 6. Publications
- Series 7. Correspondence
 - 7.1 Correspondence, General
 - 7.2 Correspondence, By Subject
- Series 8. Harriotte Smith
- Series 9. Photographs

Series 1. Nicaragua, 1927-1937

The bulk of this series consists of copies of *The Guardia Nacional de Nicaragua*, a history of the Marines in Nicaragua during the 1920s and 1930s, written by Smith. Also included are Guardia newsletters and newspaper clippings.

Series 2. Exercises, 1932-1939

This series consists of material from landing exercises held in Culebra and Vieques, Puerto Rico; Cuba; and Quantico, Virginia. Included are maps, instructions, and reports on the outcome of the exercises.

Series 3. Official Records, 1935-1941

This series consists of official Marine Corps records. Of note is documentation concerning the establishment of Camp Lejeune.

Series 4. World War II, 1943-1944

This series consists of official records primarily from the 2d Marine Division's actions on Tarawa. Included are Operation Plans, orders, memoranda, studies, and casualty lists. Also included are planning records for Operation Stalemate, the landing on Peleliu.

Series 5. Subject Files, 1910-1975

This series consists of miscellaneous files arranged by subject. Included are bulletins and programs from National Rifle Matches; a 1949 speech kit; dance card; and calling cards.

Series 6. Publications, 1925-1969

This series consists of publications collected by Smith. The bulk of the publications are about World War II and the actions of the 2d Marine Division on Tarawa. There are also publications from the National Rifle Association and a Camp Lejeune Pictorial History.

Series 7. Correspondence, 1892-1974

This series consists of correspondence produced and received by Smith. The series is arranged into two subseries: General and By Subject.

Series 7.1 Correspondence, General, 1892-1974

This subseries consists of the correspondence of Julian Smith. Incoming correspondence is interfiled with outgoing correspondence. Included are both official and unofficial correspondence. These letters cover his service in Nicaragua, World War II, and up until his

death. Of note are the letters between Smith and Archer Vandegrift and Smith and Holland Smith.

Series 7.2 Correspondence, By Subject, 1968

This subseries consists of correspondence files arranged by subject headings. They cover correspondence related to Smith's involvement in the Sons of the American Revolution organization, and the 25th Anniversary of Tarawa.

Series 8. Harriotte Smith, 1926-1976

This series consists of material belonging to Harriotte Smith, Julian Smith's wife. Prior to her marriage to Julian Smith, Harriotte was married to William Byrd, a Marine pilot who was killed in an airplane crash in Nicaragua. The bulk of this series is correspondence between Harriotte and Julian. Of note are his letters describing the actions of Marines on Tarawa and his candid remarks about other Marine Corps personalities that he shared with his wife.

Series 9. Photographs

This series consists of photographs taken during World War II and Nicaragua. The bulk of the photographs are official Marine Corps images taken on Tarawa.

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Folder 3 Culebra Exercises, 1934-1939
Folder 4 Cuba Exercises, 1933
Folder 5 5th Marines Exercises
Folder 6 World War II maps

Folder 7 This folder contains maps of New Hebrides, Tarawa, Angaur, and Peleliu
Newspapers, Certificates, Miscellaneous

This folder contains multiple items related to Smith's career. Included are commissions; the Order of Military Merit awarded by the President of the Dominican Republic; William Smith County Postmaster certificates; an accuracy test of the Browning Machine Gun, Model 1917; 20 December 1943 Newsmap; and a cover from the Presentation of the Abbott Collection of Paintings of Amphibious Operations.

Newspapers include one from Managua, Nicaragua dated 1931; the New York Times dated 29 May 1932 including an article on the Nicaraguan Guard; and the New York Times dated 26 April 1931 with an article on Caribbean policy.