

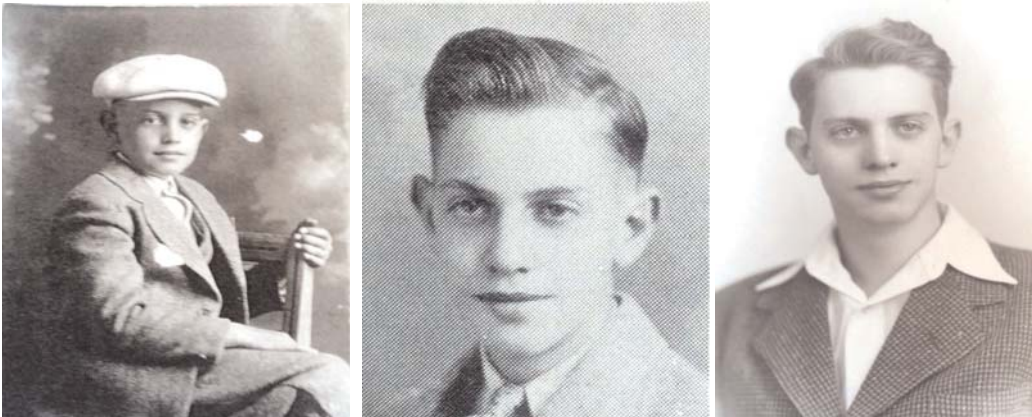
JOHN E ANDERSON



John Emanuel Anderson (6383008) was born in Willmar MN on 25 September, 1919. He was the youngest of 4 children born to Oscar Emanuel and Anna Marilda Anderson. John's father, Oscar, was a Swedish immigrant who arrived in America in 1910 and became a citizen in 1913. Oscar was born on Christmas Day, 1889 in Saxdalen, Dalarna Sweden.

John's mother, Anna, was born to Swedish immigrants in Willmar on 10 January 1891. Oscar and Anna were married on 13 June, 1913. John had three older sisters, Esther, Marian, and Alice.

He was a member of the Willmar Mission Covenant Church. He attended Willmar Schools, and graduated in 1937 from Willmar High School.



John worked as a painter & decorator with his father Oscar. Oscar's business was very successful and he was in great demand in the Willmar area. John helped his father with the many jobs that he had. Oscar fully expected that John would follow in his footsteps and take on the family business.

John as a child, John in his Junior Year, and his Senior Year Photo. (L-R)

That changed after the Japanese attacks on 7 December 1941. The country changed after Pearl Harbor, and John felt a desire to help in the war effort. On 7 February 1942, John enlisted in the US Navy and was sworn in on 17 March.

Before John left for his service in World War II, he was engaged to be married to Hannah Anderson. Their plan was to be married when he returned from the war. Hannah purchased her wedding dress and a number of household effects including china for their new life together.



Living Flag
U. S. NAVAL TRAINING STATION,
GREAT LAKES, ILLINOIS
REAR ADMIRAL, JOHN DOWNES U S NAVY,
COMMANDING OFFICER



CO. 199 - 42* A.B. ELLISON, C. Sr. CO. COMDR. MARCH 31,
U.S. NAVAL TRAINING STATION GREAT LAKES

John was sent to Great Lakes Illinois for Recruit training (Boot Camp). After being processed in, John began a multi week training regimen of physical training and Navy rules and regulations. Outfitted with uniforms, John and the other recruits were drilled in parade and ceremony rituals, tough physical training activities, and continually taught military discipline. Although many times duties may have seemed ridiculous, the men were taught to follow orders, and do their jobs in an unwavering manner.

On 31 March, John wrote his sister, Esther, that he got into the base at about 6:45am on Thursday 26 March. He had taken a physical examination, and was set to take a mental exam for duty the following day. He notes, "Things aren't so good as I thought they would be." He states that they sleep in hammocks and the stow their clothing in a sack ("or a sea bag is what we call it"). He greeted his young nephew "Donny" in the letter and says, "I'm here to fix things so he won't have to when he grows up".



"We drill a good 6 hours every day marching and using guns". He notes they wash their own clothes at night and clean the barracks morning, noon, and night. He was assigned to Company 199. He closes his letter to sister, Esther by saying, "Well I just as soon be home but I'm willing to stick this out to help protect my country."

In a later letter home to his sister on 1 April 1942 John describes that he has not had much time for writing, and has been on Kitchen Duty. At that point, he expected to be graduating from Boot Camp on 8 May. In a later letter, he found out that his graduation day was moved up, and he was to Graduate on Friday evening, 27 April 1942.



Following graduation from Boot Camp, Anderson was sent to Motor Machinist Mate School at Wahpeton North Dakota. Before reporting at school, he was allowed a short leave at home.

John's nephew, Don Franklin, recalls his mother visiting with John while he was home on furlough. Don doesn't recall if it was this specific instance, but John told his sister, Esther (Don's Mother) that he envied her having children. He noted that he wasn't sure he would live long enough to have any of his own.

After leave, John reported for Machinist Mate school at Wahpeton. Officially, the description of this job included, "Operate machine tools. Operate and maintain internal combustion engines and engine auxiliaries. Knowledge of pressure and air systems. Be familiar with electrical apparatus."

John wrote Esther on 20 May, "I don't mind working in the shop but that studying business at night is terrible along with guard duty." He mentioned that he stayed on three tiered bunks, and his bunk was on the bottom. So all the other men used his bunk to sit on after getting in from the shop. This caused his bunk to always be dirty.

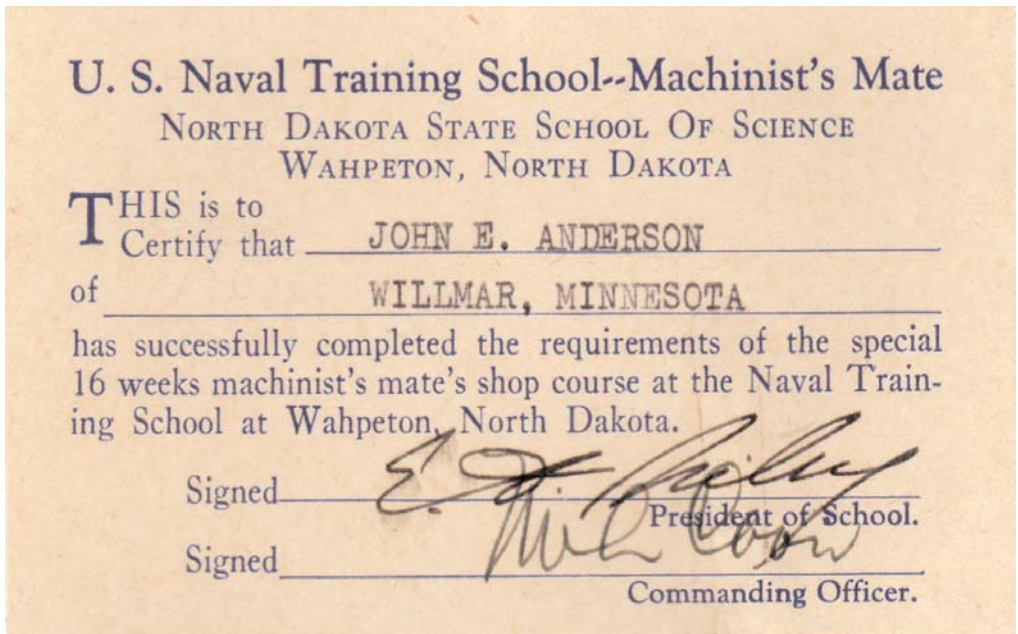
This schooling was more of a classroom setting than the physical aspects of Boot Camp. They were taught and quizzed on almost all possible issues relating to the

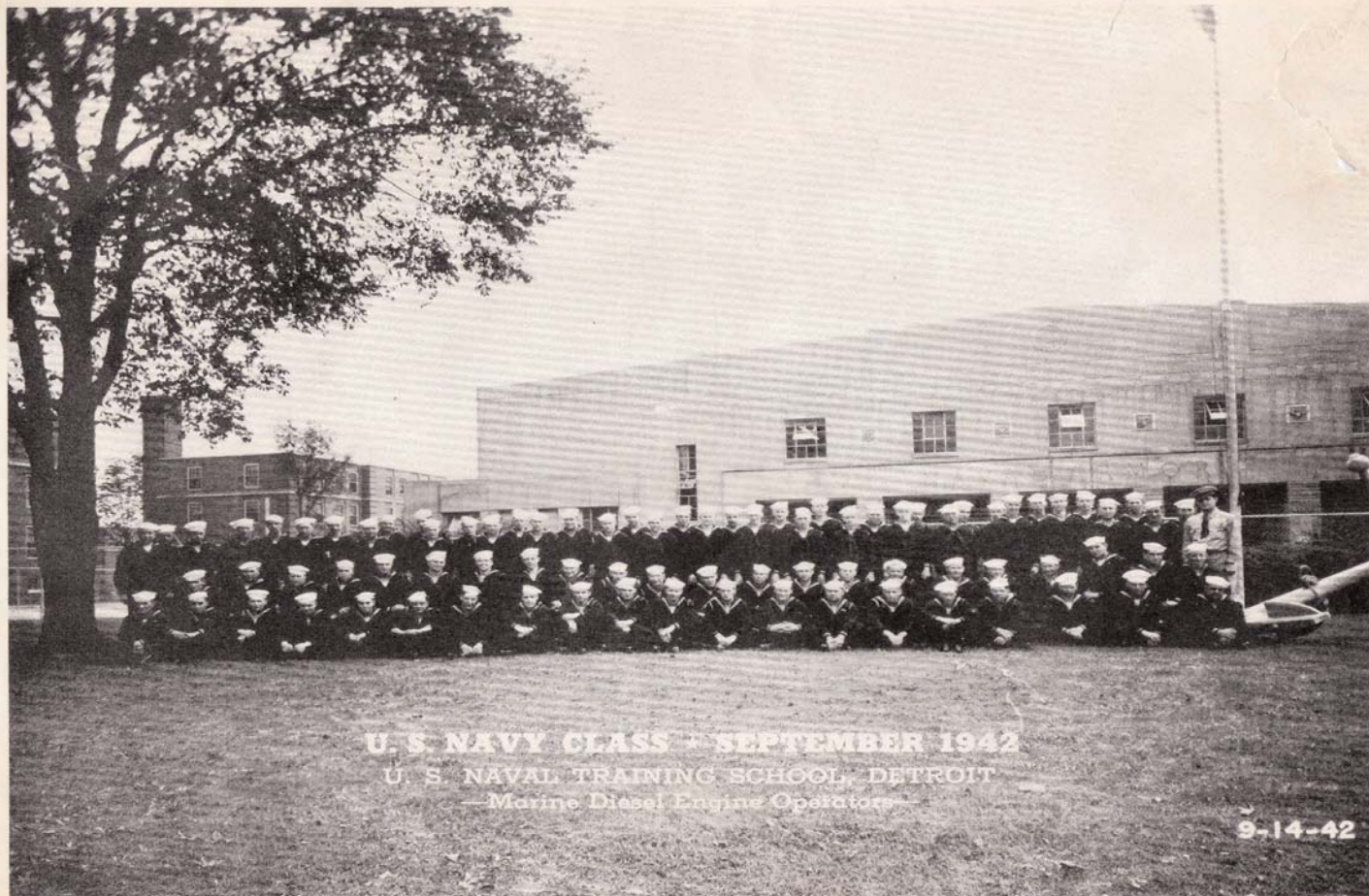
machinery they would be exposed to. In a sense, they needed to know how to keep the motors on ship running in some of the worst possible situations.

Tearing apart motors, and putting them back together John and the other members of his class became experts in handling the equipment under their care. Soon, they were set to graduate from Motor Machinist School.

In August he wrote home that he had been working at tool making, machine shop, tin shop, welding and plumbing. They also worked with engines and pumps including steam, car, and diesel engines. He was expecting to graduate and leave on 29 August.

He was allowed some time off while at training, so being so close to Minnesota he would travel home as he was able. For John, this was a great escape and opportunity for him to be training so close to home that he was able to get back to Willmar to see family and friends. Soon enough, his training was over.





U. S. NAVY CLASS - SEPTEMBER 1942
U. S. NAVAL TRAINING SCHOOL, DETROIT
— Marine Diesel Engine Operators —

9-14-42

He was sent to Detroit Michigan for Diesel Motor training. By this time, he knew what kind of ship he would be on. he was to be assigned to LCT's (Landing Craft Tank). There were about 1,00 sailors where John was staying. Their school was about 3 blocks away and they would walk to classes each day.

John noted about the diesel engines that they "tear them down in the day time and also rebuild them again." In the evening they would have "book studies" about the engines they worked on.



On LCT's he would be aboard ships that brought troops and supplies into hostile areas. They would be hauling men under fire, and had to be able to get out to reload and haul in more troops and equipment.

In late September 1942, John graduated from Marine Diesel Operator School in Detroit Michigan.

Upon completion of this training, he was sent to Norfolk Virginia for amphibious training.

In Virginia, John worked with Landing craft and practiced all of the aspects of what he learned. he wasn't very fond of Virginia and described it to his Esther as "Quite a hole, a mud hole in fact." They would spend all day in the boats practicing and going through operations. John noted that some days he'd be on the Ocean from 8am until 11pm. He told his sister in a letter that he had helped as a throttleman in the control house but it was, "Not so easy, especially when docking the boat. The boat is 105 feet long and hauls tanks!"

In letters John sent home, it was apparent that they had no idea for sure where they would be sent after. he had at one point heard rumors that they were headed to California for the Pacific theater. In the end, that wasn't the case and in late November, John left Virginia for New York and the US Navy Receiving Station in Long Beach. Here he waited for orders to head overseas. While there, he attended some other short schools for training. He stayed in a room that overlooked the ocean and described the waves rolling in to his family back home in letters.



John while in Africa

Less than one year from when he was sworn into the US Navy, John was sent overseas. He left the United States on 23 February 1944 and sent to Oran North Africa. Oran, in Algeria, had recently fallen under allied control after Operation Torch; the invasion of Africa to wipe out the Nazi hold.

After John's arrival in Africa, he prepped for Operation Husky: the invasion of Sicily. He was assigned to LCT-30. This ship was a Class 5 Landing craft built at at Manitowoc Shipbuilding Co., Manitowoc Wisconsin beginning in September 1942. Put into service in October 1942, the planned Sicilian invasion would be its first time in combat. It was a part of Flotilla 10, a fleet of around 25 ships.

The ship was commanded by Sidney Brinker. Brinker was a native of Park Ridge Illinois. He was commissioned as an Ensign after completing an Officer school in New York. In December 1942, prior to their departure of the US, he was married. John met Sidney while at training in Virginia.

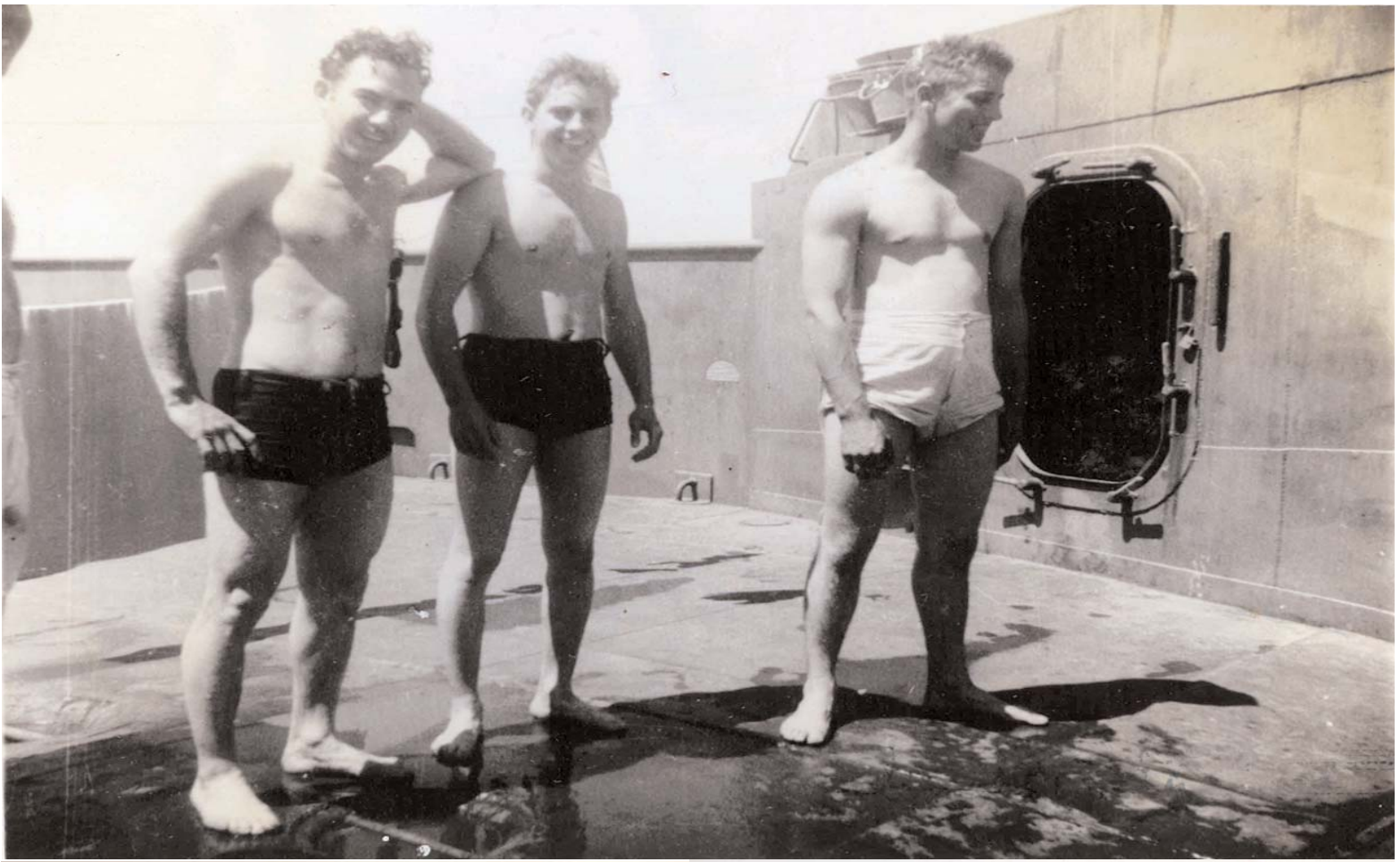


Lieutenant Sidney Brinker,
Commander LCT-30

The crew of LCT-30 John is in the middle on the left side.



The crew of LCT-30 was a total of 12 men. They worked together, lived together, and became as close to one another as family.



After weeks of planning, training, and supplying the Allies were soon ready to undertake the Sicilian campaign. In July, the stage was set and the Invasion began. John's ship set out on 10 July and landed along the Sicilian coast; they were fully loaded with men, supplies and equipment. In spite of the enemy arial attacks and mines, all ships in the flotilla but one successfully accomplished their missions of dropping men and supplies in support of the invasion. LCT 30 earned a battle star for their part in the invasion. John's ship landed at Galeta Sicily.



LCT'S UNLOAD AT SCOGLITTI, SICILY.

U S NAVY PHOTO 110-2



US Navy
Photographs
of the
Invasion of
Sicily.
Operation
Husky began
on 9 July
1943

After the invasion of Sicily and securing that island from the German and Italian aggressors, the stage was set for the invasion of mainland Italy. Operation Avalanche would be John's next step in the war.

Beginning on 3 September 1943, Allied elements began the process of liberating mainland Italy from the fascist regime. The main body of the allied assault would take place on 9 September.

Unlike most landings, the allies didn't proceed this landings with aerial or naval bombardments in an attempt to surprise. That anticipated surprise, however, was not achieved.

John's ship, LCT 30, departed Sicily bringing supplies and forces to the southern assault beaches of Salerno. The time was 0333 (3:33am). They came under enemy fire regularly during the assault.

Enemy artillery batteries along with aerial attacks were fired on them. In spite of all this, they received no damage from the enemy barrage.

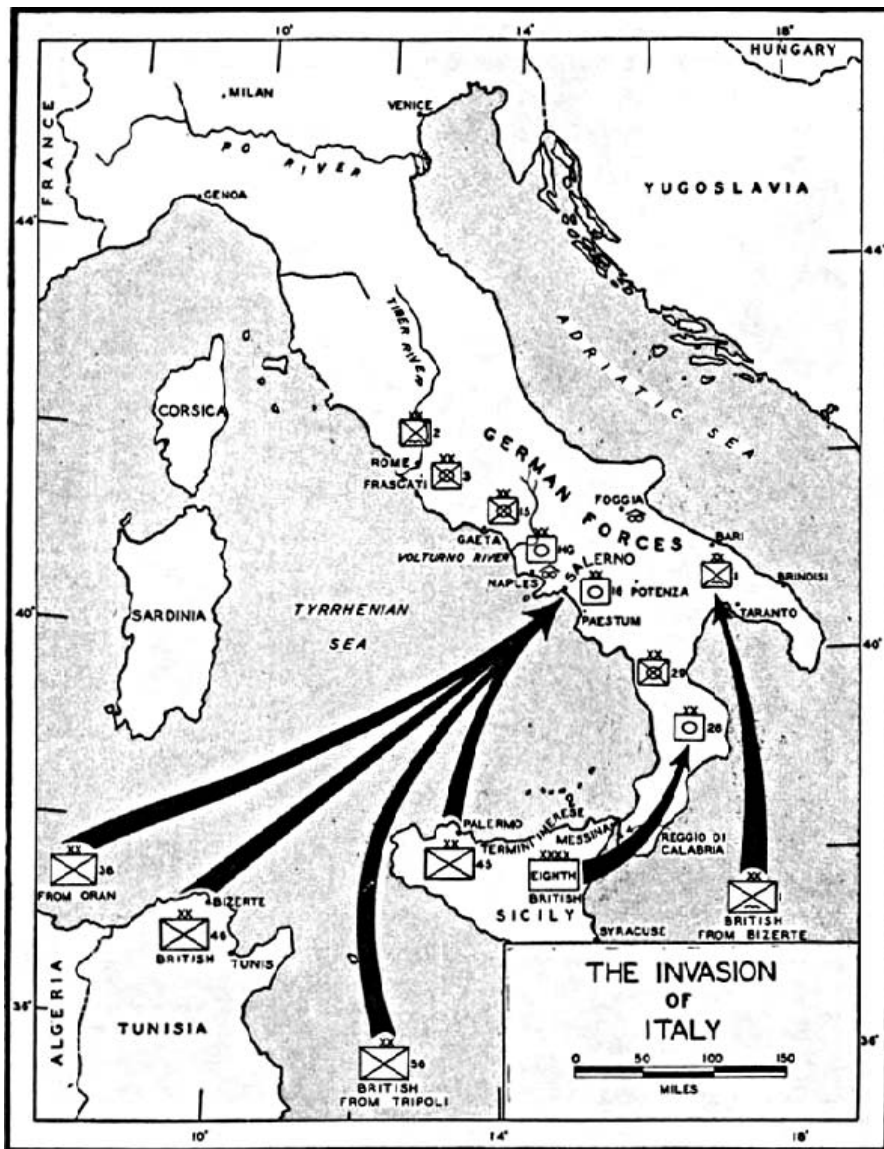
The fighting for control of Italy continued until early October by which time the whole of southern Italy was under allied control. After the beaches had been secured and the allies pushed north, John saw some shore duty while at Italy and North Africa. Christmas 1943, John spent with two other Willmar boys, Don and Doug Langager.

Italy and North Africa became John's homes until preparations for the invasion of France. They traveled back and forth from Italy to North Africa bringing in supplies for the Allied troops. In November John wrote his sister asking her about how Thanksgiving was for her.

For John, it was like pretty much any other day. He wrote, "We didn't know anything about it until dinner, which was very good. Everything you would want and more. All the turkey we could eat and things that go with a meal. The only things I missed was trying to see if the ice on the lake was strong enough to skate on. Ha!" Even while in a war zone, John had his sense of humor, and tried to make sure the family wasn't too concerned about him.

In January 1944, John was sent to England to prepare for the Allied assault on Europe. Shortly after John arrived in England, the Allies assaulted Anzio in Italy to effectively take control of the rest of that country.

His trip to England was relatively peaceful. He wrote home that only three subs were sunk on the way up by airplane carriers. About England he wrote, "at least the people talk our language and you can get something decent to eat when on liberty". John related the sights of England to the northern Minnesota, "with trees and hills, and small rivers". He noted that he thought the old fashioned homes are cute. They reminded him of a photo at home that hung on the wall. He also thanked his nephew, Donny (Don), for the prayers the youngster had for them each night. He replied, "We Sure need it".



In England John and the members of LCT 30 were assigned to Flotilla 18, Group 29. The preparation for the assault on German forces in France was difficult for those involved. They all knew they would be going, but no one but high command knew when or where. Everyone knew that they would meet stiff resistance, and the fight could be the hardest they had seen in the war.

They practiced their landings over and over. Trying to become more effective with each trial run. When time allowed, John wrote letters home to family. With the censors in place, he wasn't able to tell much of his situation to them. By late May and early June, John knew they would be going shortly. In a letter dated 2 June, 1944 he told his parents not to worry if they didn't hear from him for a while. It was his way of letting them know that he was going into combat.

Early on the morning of June 6, John and the crew of LCT 30 left England to cross the channel to France. The epic battle we now know as D-Day had begun, and John would be in the leading elements of the battle.

During an enemy Air Raid on 28 May, the ship took a couple of near misses that disabled LCT-30. Immediately put into drydock for repairs, they were able to fix things and get loaded for the invasion.

LCT 30 was fully loaded with the men and supplies of the 467th Anti Aircraft Artillery Battalion. According to the recollection of one man who served in the battalion, members of 2nd platoon were on John's ship. John, being a Motor Machinist Mate, was stationed in the boiler room of the ship during the invasion. From his position, he never would have seen the carnage going on out side.

Lieutenant Brinker's After Action Report details the events of that day. At 0400, they left their buoy in the Harbor and rendezvoused in the convey position in the bay to proceed according to plan. Their landing area was Omaha Beach, Normandy. They arrived at Omaha, Easy Green Beach and attempted to land at their designated area but so few gaps had been made through the obstacles and because of heavy shellfire they were forced to wait and search for a turn in landing positions.

One soldier was injured by a distant sniper. The report states, "Small boats with much needed reinforcements were circling off the beach. One load of engineers, approximately fifty men, asked to be transferred to our ship and were quickly taken aboard. Their Boat Captain had orders from his transport skipper not to land but to get his men to LCTs."

"At approximately 0945 we made out the yellow beaching flag on Fox Red, being waved frantically by a man lying down. It was apparent that the concentration of soldiers lying along this embankment with their feet in the water needed help badly. The beach looked clear for a landing, one of the few open places. We proceeded in immediately, passed to the side of a sunken LCV (P) without trouble, made a dry landing and began to unload our engineers and a load of half tracks and an Anti-Aircraft battery. Enemy snipers and machine gun fire strafed the ship. We fired back with both 20mm guns with good results because much of the sniping stopped."

"Snipers forced abandonment of the starboard machine gun. Edward Maloney, GM2c, remained gallantly at his port gun, strafing enemy sniper positions, in the face of their fire until the magazine drum suddenly exploded in his face. By a miracle he escaped serious injury, in fact none whatsoever. The other gunner, Quentin Mooberry, ripped off the burning drum., preventing further trouble to anyone, though burning his own hand. Others in the crew fought back with their rifles. afterwards on a hospital train, i met a Captain Scott of the 7th. Field Artillery who had been wounded and evacuated from that beach. He confirmed my opinion that our guns helped clear FoX Red of snipers."

All of this activity happened within a period of about ten minutes. LCT-30 was able to unload safely all of the vehicles and engineers from the ship onto the beach. Lt. Brinker notes in the After Action Report, "We began to retract at once and all seemed too good to be true." It was. Suddenly a magazine drum exploded aboard the ship. When they reached about 50 feet from shore, a devastating thing happened.

John had gone down below deck, to the engine rooms to check the sand traps on the ship. While he was in the engine room, an enemy shell came and exploded amidships, directly in the engine room, killing John instantly.

All engines were knocked out, and the engine room began to fill with water. Disabled, the ship grounded ashore. Lt. Brinker states in his report that John could never be reached in the engine room but it was apparent to him that John was, "killed outright". He was 24 years old.

the ship began to take further enemy fire and Lt Brinker ordered all men to abandon ship and go to the beach. The crew were ordered to get back out on one of the incoming LCIs. Survivors from other LCTs came aboard the ship hoping to get out with them, but were forced to hit the beach and find a different way out. More than four of the crewmen of LCT-30 received minor shrapnel wounds while on the beach, however, all were finally evacuated to hospitals.

<p>LCT5/318 Serial: T-01 LOT (5) FLOTILLA NORTHEAN</p> <p>O-O-N-F-I-D-E-N-T-I-A-L</p> <p>21 June 1944.</p> <p>From: Officer-in-Charge, LCT (5) #30.</p> <p>To: Commander-in-Chief, United States Fleet.</p> <p>Via: Commander Force O-2 LCT Commander Force O-2 Commander Force O Commander Task Force 122 XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX</p> <p>Subject: Action Report</p> <p>1. During the enemy air raid the night of May 26th., LCT (5) #30, underwent two near misses that disabled the ship. It was put on drydock at once for repairs and when shipped off we were immediately combat loaded for the invasion.</p> <p>2. At 0400, June 5th., LCT (5) #30 left her base in Portland Harbor, rendezvoused in its convoy position in the bay and proceeded according to plan towards the invasion shore of France. Arriving off Omaha Easy Green Beach we attempted to land on time Hplus 120 but so few gaps had been made through obstacles and because of heavy shellfire we were forced to wait and search for a turn in the landing positions, during which one soldier was injured by a distant sniper. Small boats with much needed reinforcements were circling off the beach. One load of engineers, approximately fifty men, asked to be transferred to our ship and were quickly taken aboard. Their boat coxswain had orders from his transport skipper not to land but to get his men to LCTs.</p> <p>3. At approximately 0945 we made out the yellow beaching flag on Fox Red, being waved frantically by a man lying down. It was apparent that the concentration of soldiers lying along this embankment with their feet in the water needed help badly. The beach looked clear for a landing, one of the few open places. We proceeded in immediately, passed to the side of a sunken LCV(?) without trouble, made a dry landing and began to unload our engineers and load of half-tracks-an anti-aircraft battery. Enemy snipers and machine gun fire strafed the ship. We fired back with both 20 MM guns with good results because much of the sniping stopped.</p>	<p>O-O-N-F-I-D-E-N-T-I-A-L</p> <p>From: Officer-in-Charge, LCT (5) #30.</p> <p>To: Commander-in-Chief, United States Fleet.</p> <p>Via: Commander Force O-2 LCT Commander Force O-2 Commander Force O Commander Task Force 122 XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX</p> <p>Subject: Action Report</p> <p>4. Snipers forced abandonment of the starboard machine gun. Edward Maloney, GM2C, remained gallantly at his port gun, strafing enemy sniper positions, in the face of their fire until the magazine drum suddenly exploded in his face. By a miracle he escaped serious injury, in fact none whatever. The other gunner, Quentin Mcberry, ripped off the burning drum, preventing further trouble to anyone, though burning his own hand. Others in the crew fought back with their rifles. Afterwards on a hospital train, I met a Capt. Scott of the 7th. Field Artillery who had been wounded and evacuated from that beach. He confirmed my opinion that our guns helped clear Fox Red of snipers.</p> <p>5. Within this period of ten minutes, vehicles and engineers from the small boat were unloaded safely. We began to retract at once and all seemed too good to be true. This is when the magazine drum exploded. Then when fifty feet from shore a shell exploded amidships directly in the engine room. All engines were knocked out, engine rooms filled with water immediately. The ship, disabled grounded ashore John Anderson, MM2C, could never be reached in the engine room where he had dutifully gone to check the sand traps. It was evident that he was killed outright. At the same time more "38" shells straddled the ship along with machine gun fire and I ordered all men to abandon ship and go to the beach, a less obvious target, and told them to get back out on one of the incoming LCIs.</p> <p>6. Other LCT survivors had come aboard hoping to get out on our ship. They reached shore again with us. To the best of my knowledge to date more than four of our men received minor shrapnel wounds, while on the beach, however everyone was finally evacuated to hospitals, expeditiously.</p> <p><i>Sidney W. Brinker</i> SIDNEY W. BRINKER, Lt. (jg) USNR.</p>
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Lieutenant Sidney W. Brinker's After Action Report

Lt. Brinker's family was initially notified that he was Missing in Action. Upon his return to England, he was eventually able to be "found" and the miscommunication was cleared up to his family. His brother, Robert Brinker, was lost on a sub in the Pacific in December 1943.

John's family was notified by telegram that he was killed in action. His father, Oscar, suffered an "emotional heart attack" of which he never recovered. He had hoped for John to take over the family business upon his return from the war, but this was not to be.

Don Franklin, nephew of John, recalled going to visit his grandparents in June 1944, with his mother not yet knowing of John's death. "Expecting the usual enthusiastic welcome I was greeted instead by silence, and with both my grandparents sitting silently in the dark. They had just been informed of John's death" he said.

Sadness and grief hit the Anderson family with the news of the loss of John. Lt. Brinker, sent a letter to the family expressing his sympathy at the loss of John.

Thursday
June 29th

Dear Mr. & Mrs. Anderson;

You do not know me but I feel that I have met you, because for a very long time I've lived with Johnny and heard him speak so often about you.

When the war started and as we passed through one invasion to another, I have always hoped and prayed that I would not have to write a letter containing dreadful news as this. By now you have heard from the Navy and know the terrible thing that has happened to your fine son. Believe me when I say I know how you must feel over this. It has made every one of us sad. Just this last Christmas our family received the terse announcement that my brother on a submarine in the Pacific was missing. In this war-torn world there is yet much fighting for us to do, — at least Johnny is in place.

Writing this letter I feel that you want to know as much as possible but at the same time I don't mean to over-do it and make you feel too bad.

Johnny always carried the happiest disposition of anyone in the crew. Just prior to the invasion he had passed his No. 194th examination. When finally on the way across after waiting and practicing so long, we knew it was not to be easy but were going to come through. Remember Johnny was one of the most optimistic and the boys remember him saying "will get through alright."

Our particular beach was a fine one. We landed in the middle of the morning, unloaded all our vehicles and it was while we were retracting from the beach that enemy shells hit us. Before going into the beach Johnny had been lying on his bunk reading the bible and from there he voluntarily and dutifully went down into the engine room to make sure the engines were in order.



The above photo was taken by a reporter in the days after the assault on Normandy. In the background LCT-30 can be seen along the beach. Inside the hull of the ship lies John Emanuel Anderson, 24 year old navy veteran from Willmar Minnesota.

Although the assault took out the ship, in the photo graph it remains intact and relatively undamaged. The direct hit on the ship killed Anderson.

Around the photograph is a letter Sidney Brinker wrote to the family of John Anderson. Excerpts of this letter were used on the memorial card for the services for John in Willmar.

In talking with the Chaplain later about it he said Johnny was one of the few that was prepared to die.

The rest of us have been living ashore the past few days, — having lost everything or it would be possible to send you some of John's belongings.

In addition to my many address I'll enclose my home address, and should you want to write me, the letter would be best to me. And please let me know if there's anything I could do for you.

This has been a hard letter to write. In time of sorrow I wish I could be of more comfort to you. I do hope you are bearing up through this tragic happening. Johnny was such a fine boy — he did die courageously and while I know that doesn't bring him back to you; ... I shall always remember him.

Very sincerely,
Sid. Brinker

Participated in Three Invasions

Mo. M. M. 1-c John E. Anderson Killed in Normandy

Motor Machinists Mate 1/C John E. Anderson, who was killed in action with the American forces during the invasion of Normandy, was born in Willmar September 25, 1919.

He attended school here and was a member of the Willmar high school class of 1937. From that time until his enlistment in the Navy, he worked with his father, Oscar E. Anderson, as a painter.



Mo. M. M. 1/C JOHN E. ANDERSON

He enlisted in the Navy here and was sworn in on March 17, 1942 in Minneapolis. He was sent to Great Lakes for his boot training, and upon completion of that training, returned here for a leave. He then returned to Great Lakes and was sent to Machinist Mate school at Wahpeton, North Dakota.

From there he went to Detroit, Michigan for his LCT (Landing Craft Tank) training and then was sent to Norfolk, Va., for amphibious training. He left there for overseas service on February 22, 1943, landing at Oran, North Africa.

Taking part in the Sicilian and Salerno invasions, he saw much action. His craft landed at Galeta, Sicily, and after the landing at Salerno, he saw some service on shore duty.

Last Christmas he spent with Don and Doug Langager at Oran, North Africa.

In January John was sent to England where he remained until the invasion of Normandy. The last letter received by his parents was written on June 2, and he told them not to worry if they did not hear from him for awhile. He operated an LCT boat in the Normandy invasion.

John was a member of the Mission Covenant church, joining upon confirmation. He was a member of the Sunday School, the choir and the young peoples organizations in the church.

Surviving are his parents, Mr. and Mrs. Oscar E. Anderson and three sisters, Esther (Mrs. Robert Franklin) of Minneapolis; Marion at home and Alice (Mrs. Sidney Johnson) of Willmar.

The message received on Saturday did not state the date on which he met his death, saying that he had been killed in the service of his country and the body has been interred in an allied grave, until cessation of hostilities.

West Central
Tribune
Newspaper
reports on
the death of
John
Anderson.

John E. Anderson Killed in Action

Sgt. Truman Langager Wounded on June 6th

The sad news arrived this morning that Motor Machinist's Mate 1/c John E. Anderson, son of Mr. and Mrs. Oscar E. Anderson, of 925 West 6th street, was killed in action during the invasion of Normandy.

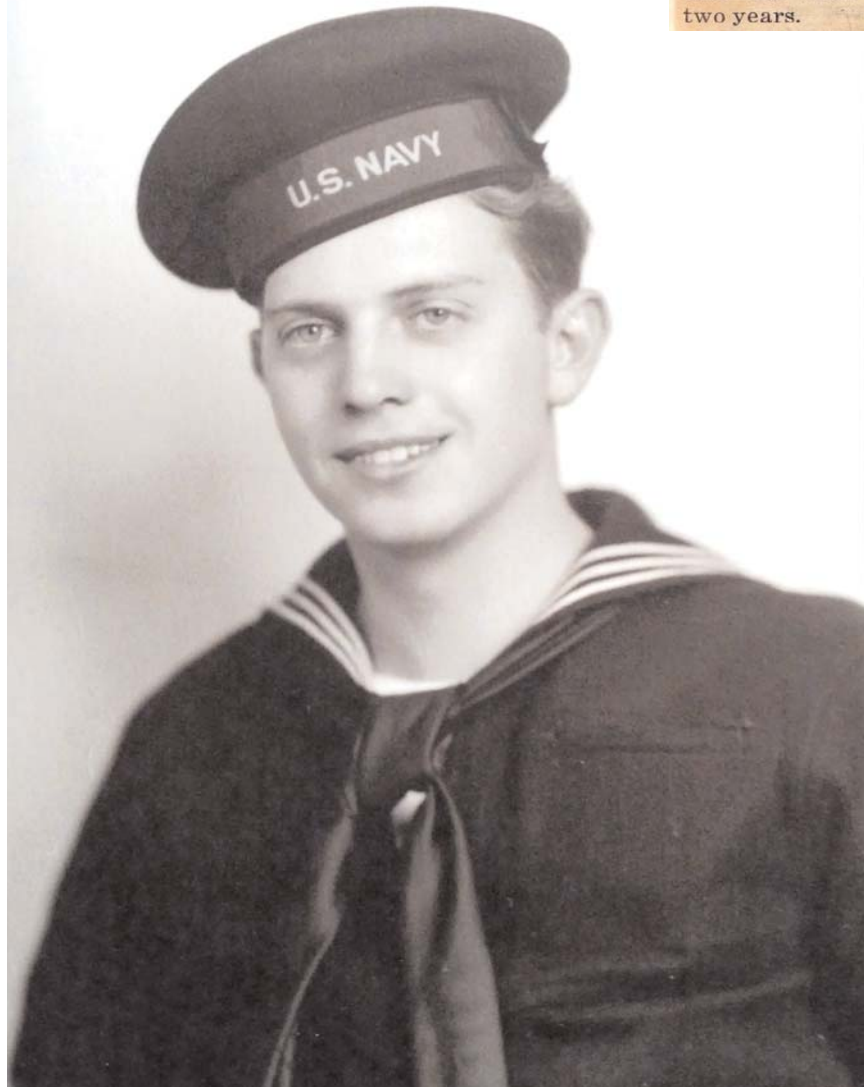
He ran an LCT (Landing Craft Tank) and took part in the invasions of Sicily, Salerno and Normandy.

He was 24 years of age, and enlisted in the Navy in February, 1942. He went overseas about a year later, having been overseas about 18 months.

Word was also received this morning that Sgt. Truman Langager, son of Mr. and Mrs. Simon Langager, was wounded in action on June 6.

The last known of Sgt. Langager, he was in New Guinea.

He entered the service three years ago next month and has been overseas for two years.




John Emanuel
Anderson.

25 September
1919

6 June 1945





THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
 TO ALL WHO SHALL SEE THESE PRESENTS, GREETING:
 THIS IS TO CERTIFY THAT
 THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
 PURSUANT TO AUTHORITY VESTED IN HIM BY CONGRESS
 HAS AWARDED THE
PURPLE HEART
 ESTABLISHED BY GENERAL GEORGE WASHINGTON
 AT NEWBURGH, NEW YORK, AUGUST 7, 1782
 TO
John Emanuel Anderson, Motor Machinist's Mate First Class, United States Naval Reserve
 FOR MILITARY MERIT AND FOR WOUNDS RECEIVED
 IN ACTION
 resulting in his death June 6, 1944
 GIVEN UNDER MY HAND IN THE CITY OF WASHINGTON
 THIS 2nd DAY OF August 19 44
Russell J. Perry
VICE ADMIRAL, UNITED STATES NAVY
James Forrestal
THE SECRETARY OF THE NAVY

John was awarded the Purple Heart posthumously, along with the American Campaign Medal, European, Italian, North African Campaign Medal, the Presidential Unit Citation, the Combat Action Ribbon, and World War II Victory medal.

In reply address not the signer of this letter, but Bureau of Naval Personnel, Navy Department, Washington 25, D.C.

Refer to No.

NAVY DEPARTMENT
BUREAU OF NAVAL PERSONNEL
 WASHINGTON 25, D. C.



Pers-68-mvh
191/c38 30 08

6 JUL 1945

Mr. Oscar Emanuel Anderson,
925 - 6th Street,
West Willmar, Minnesota.

Dear Mr. Anderson:

The Chief of Naval Personnel takes pride in forwarding a facsimile and ribbon bar with bronze star of the Presidential Unit Citation awarded the U.S. LCT(5)30 for outstanding performance and heroic service in combat during the assault on the Coast of Normandy, France, launched on 6 June 1944. Your son, the late John Emanuel Anderson, Motor Machinist's Mate First Class, U.S. Naval Reserve, was attached to the above unit on the occasion of the citation.

By direction of Chief of Naval Personnel.

Sincerely yours,
R. J. Hardy
 R. J. HARDY,
 Commander, USN,
 Enlisted Performance Division.

THE SECRETARY OF THE NAVY
 WASHINGTON

The President of the United States takes pleasure in presenting the **PRESIDENTIAL UNIT CITATION** to the

UNITED STATES LCT (5) 30

for service as set forth in the following

CITATION:

"For outstanding performance and heroic service in combat during the assault on the Coast of Normandy, France, launched on June 6, 1944. Defying terrific artillery and machine-gun fire of the enemy, the U.S. LCT 30 daringly advanced through mined and unswept waters, ramming and breaching enemy-emplaced obstacles at full speed to clear a channel for the assault waves standing off shore and previously repulsed by the ferocity of the German fire. With guns ablaze in answer to point-blank fire from hostile positions, LCT 30 boldly fought it out with the enemy as she went in, silencing his guns and, by her gallant example of resolute and indomitable purpose, inspired the remaining craft to follow with their vehicles and men so vital to the assault operations. Unwavering in response to an urgent need for swift action and splendid in her leadership, the LCT 30 initiated the forward movement of ships by a feat of exceptional bravery, indicative of the determination, the valor and the tenacious fighting spirit of the officers and men who determined her course."

For the President,
James Forrestal
 Secretary of the Navy

Letters and certificates for John's medals. At bottom right is the ribbon rack representing the awards earned by John.

A request was made in 2012 asking for a listing of all of John's medals & ribbons. This is when it was discovered the award of the Combat Action Ribbon. The set at right was constructed by the United States Military Historical Collection (USMHC)



The following letter of tribute to John was received by the family from his officer, Lt. Sid Brinker, and is a beautiful testimony to John's faith in God. It was written from Normandy after John had been reported killed in action.

★ ★ ★

Thursday, June 29

Dear Mr. and Mrs. Anderson:

You do not know me but I feel that I have met you, because for a very long time I've lived with Johnny and heard him speak so often about you.

When the war started and as we passed through one invasion to another, I have always hoped and prayed that I would not have to write a letter containing dreadful news as this. By now you have heard from the Navy and know the terrible thing that has happened to your fine son. Believe me when I say I know how you must feel over this. It has made everyone of us sad. Just this last Christmas, our family received the terse announcement that my brother on a submarine in the Pacific was missing. In this war-torn world, there is yet much fighting for us to do,—at least Johnny is in peace.

Writing this letter I feel that you want to know as much as possible but at the same time I don't mean to over-do it and make you feel too bad.

Johnny always carried the happiest disposition of anyone in the crew. Just prior to the invasion he had passed his Mo.MM1/c examination. When finally on the way across after waiting and practicing so long, we knew it was not to be easy but were going to come through. I remember Johnny was one of the most optimistic and the boys remember him saying, "We'll get through alright".

Our particular beach was a fierce one. We landed in the middle of the morning, unloaded all our vehicles and it was while we were retracting from the beach that enemy shellfire hit us. Before going into the beach, Johnny had been lying on his bunk reading the Bible and from there he voluntarily and dutifully went down into the engine-room to make sure the engines were in order.

In talking with the chaplain later about it he said Johnny was one of the few that was prepared to die.

The rest of us have been living ashore the past few days,—having lost everything or it would be possible to send you some of John's belongings.

In addition to my navy address, I'll enclose my home address, and should you want to write me, the latter would be the best to use. And please let me know if there's anything I could do for you.

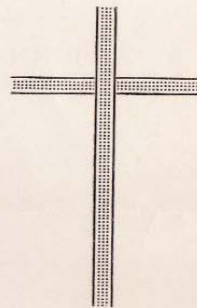
This has been a hard letter to write. In time of sorrow I wish I could be of more comfort to you. I do hope you are bearing up through this tragic happening. Johnny was such a fine boy—he did die courageously and while I know that doesn't bring him back to you . . . I shall always remember him.

Very sincerely,

Sid Brinker

Lt.(jg) S. W. Brinker,
526 No. Washington St.,
Park Ridge, Illinois.

"I have fought the
good fight, I have
kept the faith; hence-
forth there is laid
up for me a crown . . ."



Memorial Service

FOR

JOHN E. ANDERSON

Mo. M. M. 1-c U. S. N. R.

July 30, 1944

7:45 P. M.



Mission Covenant Church

WILLMAR, MINNESOTA

In Sacred Memory of

JOHN EMANUEL ANDERSON

Motor Machinist Mate First Class,
United States Navy



Born at Willmar, Minnesota, September 25, 1919

Son of Mr. and Mrs. Oscar E. Anderson

Resided with parents to 1942

Confirmed and received as member of Willmar Mission Covenant Church 1933

Attended Willmar Public Schools

Member of Class of 1937, Willmar High School

Inducted into armed forces of our country, March 17, 1942

Went overseas February 22, 1943 and landed in North Africa, participating in the invasions of Sicily, Italy, and from there to England,

Killed in Action in Normandy Invasion, June 6, 1944

Order of Service

Organ Prelude:

We Wait for a Great and Glorious Day - - - - - Skoog
What a Friend We Have In Jesus - - - - - Converse
The Old Rugged Cross - - - - - Bennard

Mrs. Erick Elkjer

Anthem: "Rock of Ages" - - - - - Hastings
Church Choir

Vocal Solo: "Some Day, He'll Make It Plain To Me" - Geibel
Mrs. Nathan Sundberg

Reading of the Scripture and Prayer
Reuben Bengtson

Selection: "We Shall Meet But We Shall Miss Him"
Male Quartette

Reading of Greetings, Letters and Memorials

Memorial Tribute:
Rev. Nathaniel Franklin

Presentation of American Legion Gold Star Citation
A. F. Feilzer, Commander, American Legion Post

Presentation of United States Flag
Honorable Harry L. Wahlstrand

Selection: "More Secure Is No One Ever" - - - - Sandell
Girls Trio

Memorial Message:
Rev. Nathan Sundberg

Anthem: "When They Ring the Golden Bells" - - DeMarbelle
Church Choir

The Placing of the Gold Star
Sidney Johnson

Vocal Solo: "When the Blue Star Turns to Gold" - - - Reitz
Marjorie Hedin

Taps

Silent Prayer

Selection: "God Bless Our Lads" - - Words by E. Sparrow
Church Choir

Benediction

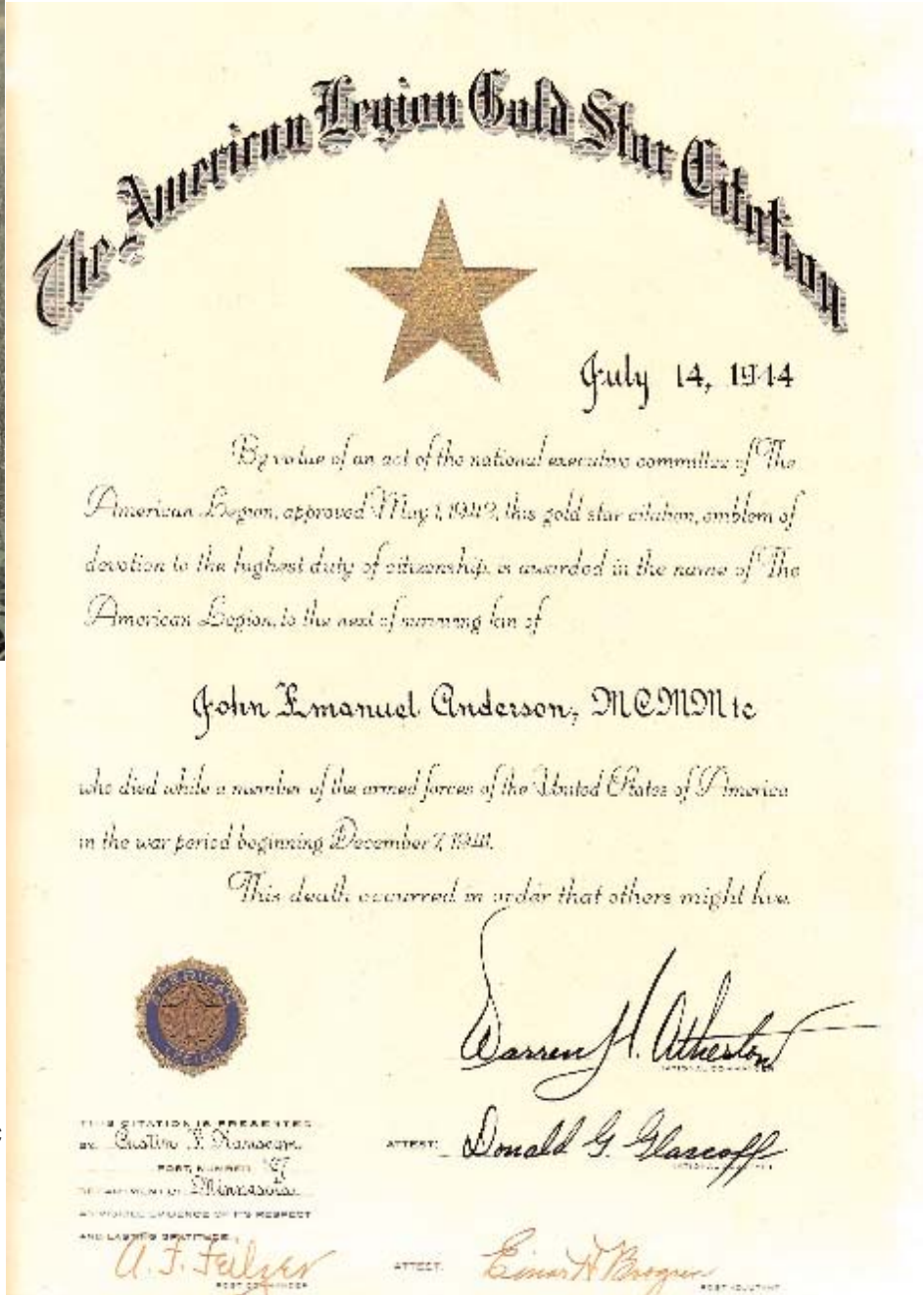
Postlude: "In the Sweet By and By"

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The floral tributes in the church are given in loving remembrance of John by his parents, Mr. and Mrs. Oscar Anderson, and Mr. and Mrs. Robert Franklin, Mr. and Mrs. Sidney Johnson, Marian Anderson, Hannah Johnson.



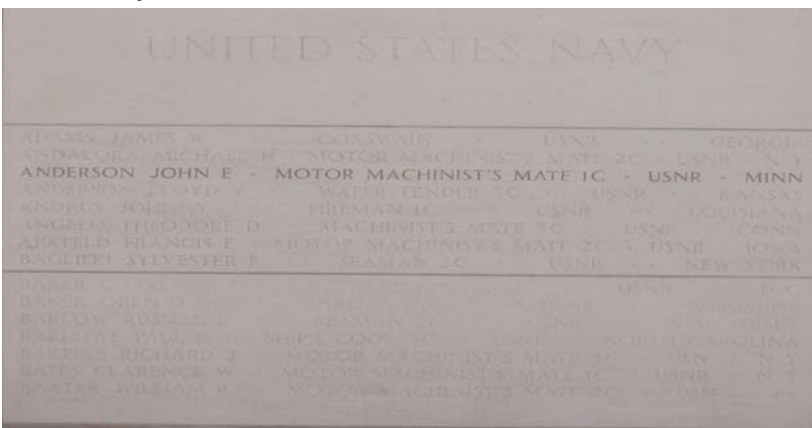
In reports given to the family after his death, it was reported that John's body was recovered and turned over to Graves registration for burial overseas until after secession of hostilities in Europe. After the war, however, the family was informed that the original report was inaccurate, and that John was not recovered and lost at sea.



This information is what the family went on; that John was another lost casualty in the War. They placed a "memorial" stone at Fairview Cemetery in Willmar in his memory.

When the US Military Cemetery was created in Normandy, John was listed as one of the Missing in Action on the Memorial Wall.

John's loss hit the family hard. His father, Oscar, never fully recovered from the tragic loss and passed away of heart failure in 1956 at the age of 67. John's mother died in 1969 at the age of 79. Both passed believing their only son was lost at sea at Normandy.



At top left, the memorial stone placed at Fairview Cemetery in Willmar. Above, the Gold Star Citation given to John's parents. At right, a Gold Star pin, given to those who lost a family member in the military. At left, John's name on the wall at the Normandy, St. Laurent cemetery in France as Missing in Action.





That changed in 2009, when John's surviving sisters learned of the possibility that his remains were recovered and buried in the American Cemetery in Normandy. Two independent researchers, Ted Darcy and Brian Siddall, had made it their mission to try to find the identities of the "unknown" fallen in military cemeteries. Their research pointed to the possibility that John was recovered and buried in an unknown grave, "X-91". The research they did showed that the remains interred in that grave were recovered from the boiler room of LCT-30. They believe that John rests in Plot H, Row 11, Grave 14.

They proceeded to contact the remaining family to pass along their findings.

The researchers contacted the Kandiyohi County Historical Society to find out any next of kin that could provide an DNA sample for the identification. Family members were tracked down, and notified of the possibility that John may have been found.

The researchers report notes, "A Navy salvage party later recovered bodies and turned them over to the Army Graves Registration personnel for burial. John Anderson was buried in the St. Laurent Cemetery overlooking Omaha Beach. Anderson's identity was lost during the processing of his remains and he was buried as Unknown X-91 St. Laurent. The St. Laurent Cemetery was later design-

ated the Normandy American Military Cemetery."

John's sister, Esther, supplied a Mitochondrial DNA sample to the Joint POW/MIA Accountability Command (JPAC) in Hawaii for testing. The hope was that JPAC would receive the sample, and the investigation information and tests would be run to try to identify if the remains were in fact John.

The documentation shows that the remains recovered would support the possibility that they could be John. Recovered from the Boiler Room of the ship, the remains are only partial, and identification of them during the 1940's & 1950's would have been impossible. With the new technology of DNA, it is now possible to test those remains for proper identification.

The researchers sent their findings to JPAC in Hawaii, waiting to hear a response. Time passed, and nothing was heard from the inquiry. John's remaining sisters, Esther and Marian, have both passed away since the DNA sample was submitted and the possibility of "finding him" came about.

The process stalled, with no answers as to "if" the remains in Grave X-91 were in fact those of John Anderson. The remaining family members patiently waited to hear something about the case.

After years had passed with no word, they decided to become more pro active on the situation and began to explore ways of finding out just what was going on with the process.

A Willmar family believed their loved one was buried at sea during World War II, but recently learned his body may lie in a military cemetery

COULD IT BE?



Submitted photo

Oscar E. and Anna Anderson of Willmar died believing that their only son had been buried at sea after being killed in action during the D-Day Invasion of Normandy, France, on June 6, 1944.

Now, surviving family members hope to learn whether the remains of U.S. Navy Motor Machinist Mate 1st Class John E. Anderson were interred in the Saint Laurent Cemetery, Baveux, France, as an unknown American casualty of World War II. The cemetery overlooking Omaha Beach has since been designated as the Normandy American Military Cemetery. His name is

listed there as among the "Missing In Action" from the conflict.

Don Franklin knows that much for a fact, having visited the cemetery during a trip to Europe. Franklin is a Willmar High School alumni and music professor emeritus at the University of Pittsburgh.

His mother, Esther, a long-time Willmar resident now age 95 and living in Minneapolis, is the eldest surviving sister of John E. Anderson. Franklin said he never had any reason to suspect that one of the many unmarked graves could hold the remains of his late uncle.

John/ Page A2

BY TOM CHERVENY ❖ WEST CENTRAL TRIBUNE

After combining the information from the researchers, and information and letters they had in regards to John's death from the family, a file was sent to the Navy POW/MIA division who reviewed the case.

This article ran in the West Central Tribune in October 2009 talking about John Anderson's case, and the possibility of the location of his remains.

The United States Military Historical Collection (USMHC), being located in the Willmar area knew of John Anderson and that he was lost in action on D-Day. While working on the Honor Wreath Project, John's stone at Fairview was one of the ones the project makes a point to place a wreath at for the holidays.



On 7 June 2012, the family of John Anderson contacted USMHC to discuss ideas on how to find out the status of the information that was sent to JPAC.

They forwarded the information provided to them by the independent researchers, and USMHC reviewed the evidence and began to proceed with the best course of action for inquiry.

John

Continued from A1

Everything changed a few days ago, when the Rev. Mark Bengston Calcedonia, son of Marian and the late Reuben Bengston of Willmar, called with news.

There is very good reason to believe that the remains of John E. Anderson are those listed in military records as "Unknown X-91" and buried in the cemetery in France, Bengston told his brother-in-law.

His mother Marian, 93, and Esther are the surviving sisters of John E. Anderson. A DNA swab from family members would make it possible to positively identify whether the remains are those of their brother and bring closure for the family.

It is a closure that the family would very much appreciate, according to Bengston. He said he believes it always troubled John Anderson's parents that their son was buried or lost at sea and could not be returned home.

If closure is made possible in this case, the credit will belong to Ted Darcy of Milton, Mass., and Brian Siddall of Ithaca, N.Y.

A 30-year veteran of the U.S. Marine Corps, Darcy has made it his mission with the WFI Research Group of Fall River, Mass., to help families whose loved ones were recorded as missing in action by the U.S. military.

Darcy has helped solve many MIA cases from World War II battles in the Pacific theatre, and is now turning his attention to Europe. Siddall was poring through U.S. Navy records and passed on this information to him: The transport ship USS LST-30 had successfully discharged members of the 467th Anti-Aircraft Artillery Battalion on the French coast near Colleville on D-Day. During its retraction it was struck by German artillery and small arms fire and its engine room was flooded.

Two members of the crew were reported killed in action: Richard Jared Taylor of Taunton, Mass., and John Emanuel Anderson of Willmar.

Their bodies were recovered and turned over to the Army. Both bodies were buried in the Saint Laurent Cemetery, but only Ensign Taylor's grave was identified. Anderson's body was declared Unknown-91, said Darcy.

He believes that the Army had lost the records and consequently Anderson's body was wrongly interred as that of an unknown casualty.

Darcy said he realized that tracking down an Anderson six decades after his death in the Scandinavian community of Willmar would be no sure thing. He contacted this newspaper for help in finding surviving family members. Kandyohi County Historical Society Director Jill Wahnoutka searched through the files to not only identify the family, but to uncover West Central Tribune newspaper accounts of John Anderson's death on D-Day as a crew member of the LST-30.

Anderson had enlisted in the Navy on March 17, 1942, and took part in the Sicilian and Salerno invasions before his death at Normandy at age 24, according to those accounts.

Given the information that can be documented in this case, Darcy said he is confident that the military will approve moving ahead with the process of making a positive identification of the remains.

However, he warned that it could be several months or more before the family

learns for certain whether or not the remains belong to their loved one.

If the remains are confirmed as those of Anderson, the family has the option of seeing that his grave is properly marked with the remains returned to Willmar as his final resting place.

Bengston and Franklin said the family has not made any decisions. The two surviving sisters initially expressed some sentiments towards leaving his remains with the other young men he fought alongside. But Bengston, whose late father, Reuben, was the Tribune "Man About Town" columnist, is a Methodist minister. He said he can't help but think of the Biblical story of Joseph in Egypt and Jacob's promise to return his bones home.

Darcy said his only concern is that surviving family members know the fate of their loved ones who died in the service of their country. There are more than 8,900 other MIA cases like this that he believes can be resolved.

To learn more about the WFI Research Group, see their web site: <http://www.wfirg.org>

Initial information from JPAC and the Navy stated that there was no record of having been sent any information on John Anderson other than the DNA sample in 2009. The information being sent to the Navy POW/MIA division was new to them and to JPAC's files.

After an extensive review of the materials sent to the Navy, they responded on 25 September (John's birthday) that they had reviewed the information and were hand delivering the file to JPAC for their review. In October 2012, a JPAC correspondence on the case stated that there was enough evidence to support a deeper review of the information to determine if it could be determined that John Anderson was, in fact, the person laid to rest in grave X-91.

There were concerns on this case, especially given the small amount of remains that were recovered in 1944. USMHC and the Navy POW/MIA were hopeful, but there was no certainty on what would be found.

In April 2013, correspondence from JPAC was received stating that although it is possible that the remains are John Anderson there was not enough conclusive proof to proceed with a disinterment to test and be sure.

The JPAC report stated multiple concerns for this case, including the small amount of remains recovered. Because of the small amount of remains that were recovered, there was no possibility of measuring or finding any way of identification in the 1940's and 1950's when they were processed. That leaves them no leads on the height of the person they came from.

Also, although there is a document stating that the body was recovered from LCT-30 boiler room, that is the only documentation in regards to this set of remains that connects John to this grave. They feel it is entirely possible that this could be in error given the vast number of casualties that were handled in the time following the Normandy campaign.

Unfortunately, after all this time, it appeared that JPAC was not able to proceed with an identification process at this time. USMHC has been continuing to look into information and records to find further evidence to support that the remains are John Anderson. It has been in contact with the family of Sidney W. Brinker, the Commanding Officer of LCT-30 and has acquired copies of the after action report and other personal photos that have been passed along to the family.



Tailor Made Uniform John had made for him, but it was so far out of code that he wasn't ever able to wear it.

USMHC does not intend to "give up" on this, and hopes that in the near future it will be able to find a way to determine for sure if John Anderson is in fact lying in X-91, or is lost at sea. After 70 years however, John is not forgotten, nor is his service and sacrifice to our country.

In one of John's last letters home to his sister he wrote, "If I ever get back and become a civilian again I really don't know what I'll do." John seemed to know that death was always a possibility in war, but he probably never thought he would be missing or unknown. Hopefully with further work and research, he won't John will finally be identified and his grave will be known to the world.