

# PRITZKER MILITARY MUSEUM & LIBRARY

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## Edward Drenka Collection

**Creator:** Edward P. Drenka  
**Dates:** 1941-2012  
**Quantity:** .25 linear feet  
**Acquisition:** Donated by Patricia A. Mack, March 21, 2012  
**Identification:** PMML ID# 800119, OCLC# 794457232, Call# PAPERS 00103  
**Citation:** [Document Title]. The Edward Drenka Collection, [Box #, Folder #], Pritzker Military Museum & Library, Chicago, IL.  
**Language:** English  
**Finding Aid:** Written by Erica Valle; Updated by Julie Murray in August 2013; Updated by Andrea Martinez, 2018

*Archival collections are stored at a remote archival facility. Please contact the Museum & Library at least 48 hours in advance of your visit to view an archival collection.*

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## Biographical Note

Edward Paul Drenka was born on August 5, 1925. In 1942, at the age of seventeen, he entered active duty in the Coast Guard, serving on a number of destroyer escorts around Europe, most notably the U.S.S. *Calcaterra*. In 1946, he was honorably discharged and returned home to Chicago, Illinois. Drenka married Irene Lambert in 1947 and they had four children: Patricia, Janet, Robert, and Thomas. He served as a Chicago firefighter for many years before retiring. In 2010, he participated in Honor Flight Chicago, which flew him and other World War II veterans to Washington, D.C. to tour the various memorials there.

Edward Drenka died on January 18, 2012, at the age of eighty-six.

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## Scope and Content of the Collection

The Edward Drenka Collection is made up of items pertaining to the military service of Edward P. Drenka, who served in the Coast Guard during World War II. The collection

includes official government documents, photographs, correspondence, and newspaper clippings, as well as his Coast Guard uniform and various medals.

## **Arrangement**

The collection is organized into 7 series:

### **Series One: Government Documents**

This series contains official government documents pertaining mostly to Drenka's military service, including his discharge papers and identification cards. It also includes a book of propaganda cartoons.

### **Series Two: Correspondence**

This series contains correspondence sent to Drenka and his family over the years, including condolence letters. It also includes Drenka's wedding invitation.

### **Series Three: Funeral Items**

This series contains items pertaining to Drenka's funeral services, including a funeral card with his name and dates of birth/death.

### **Series Four: Honor Flight Chicago**

This series contains items from Drenka's trip with Honor Flight Chicago to Washington, D.C. It includes a commemorative book, pamphlets on various D.C. memorials, and a certificate to Drenka thanking him for his service.

### **Series Five: Coast Guard Items**

This series contains items pertaining to the Coast Guard, including a 1989 Coast Guard calendar and decals.

### **Series Six: Newspapers**

This series contains newspapers and clippings, including two front page headlines from December 7th and 8th, 1941.

### **Series Seven: Miscellaneous**

This series contains two items that did not fit anywhere else: A Flags of the U.S.A. pamphlet, and a clipping of a World War II ad.

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## Separations

This series contains hundreds of photos taken from 1943 until 2012, separated into five groups: Black and White photos, Color Photos, Large Photos, Photos from the Correspondence Series, and Miscellaneous.

Item ID	Description	Date
800119148	Navy Blue Coast Guard Uniform (Pants, Top, Tie)	
800119149	U.S. Coast Guard Plaque	
800119150	Poster of Ed Drenka in Coast Guard uniform	
800119151	Dog tag	
800119152	U.S. Coast Guard Flags (2)	
800119153	World War II Victory Medal and bar pin	
800119154	American Campaign Medal and bar pin	
800119155	European-African-Middle Eastern Campaign Medal and bar pin	
800119156	Coast Guard Medal and and Ribbon	
800119157	Uniform Patch	
800119158	American Flag Pin	
800119159	Bald Eagle Lapel Pin	
800119160	U.S. Coast Guard Model Ship	
800119161	U.S.S. <i>Buckley</i> model ship (unopened)	
800119162	Portrait of U.S. Coast Guard ship	
800119163	Chicago Fire Department Officer Patch	

800119164 Navy Blue Coast Guard Cover - Located in "Library Collection"

*Life Magazine*

Book: *Posters of World War II*

Book: *Play It Again*

Book: *H is for Honor*

### **Series Eight: Photography**

1942-  
1993, n.d.

#### **Black and White Photos**

1942-  
1947, n.d.

800119042	Ed and a friend posed in uniform with a backdrop	n.d.
800119043	Two sailors in uniform	n.d.
800119044	Ed and his mother posed in front of their house	8/8/1943
800119045	Ed in uniform posed with his mother	8/8/1943
800119046	Man sitting on a dock	n.d.
800119047	Man standing on a walkway to a ship	n.d.
800119048	Two sailors working on the side of a ship	n.d.
800119049	Two sailors posed near a ship	n.d.
800119050	Three sailors sitting on the edge of a ship smiling	n.d.
800119051	Photo of the three sailors posed on a ship near an American flag	n.d.
800119052	Ed posed underneath a boardwalk. Caption: "Daddy"	n.d.
800119053	Three sailors posed with a dog. Caption: "Sam, Bob, and Paul"	n.d.
800119054	Young Ed in R.O.T.C. uniform. Caption: "Me in the R.O.T.C." Back: "Daddy when he was young"	n.d.
800119055	Ed in his R.O.T.C. uniform with his parents	n.d.
800119056	Ed in his uniform in front of a shop window	n.d.

800119057	Ed in a suit and tie smiling	n.d.
800119058	Ed in front of a building (2 copies)	n.d.
800119059	Ed posed on the side of a road	n.d.
800119060	Cutout photo of Ed's head	n.d.
800119061	Torn photo of Ed and a friend in a photo booth	n.d.
800119062	Photo of a docked ship	n.d.
800119063	Photo of a cargo ship	n.d.
800119064	Ed staring up at the camera near a rowboat	n.d.
800119065	Ed posed in front of some trees	n.d.
800119066	Ed and buddies. Caption: "A few of the boys and me" (2 copies)	n.d.
800119067	Photo of a bunch of sailors on a Jeep	n.d.
800119068	Sailors at the beach	n.d.
800119069	Sailors posed at the beach with a woman	n.d.
800119070	Caption: "Sam, Paul, Bob, Ed."	n.d.
800119071	A sailor standing in front of a car	n.d.
800119072	Caption: "C.O. and Straits."	n.d.
800119073	Two men on a boat	n.d.
800119074	Ed on a balcony	n.d.
800119075	Ed on a speedboat. Caption: "My father"	n.d.
800119076	Two sailors by U.S. Naval Hospital. Caption: "To Eddie, my pal. From Frank."	11/27/1943
800119077	Ed and Irene outside the church on their wedding day	4/19/1947
800119078	Ed and Irene at the altar	4/19/1947
800119079	Young Ed with his mother	n.d.
800119080	Portrait of Ed standing outside a house (2 copies)	n.d.
800119081	Formal portrait of Ed in Coast Guard uniform. Caption:	n.d.

"Your seaman cracker, or Eddie."

800119082	Close up photo of Ed	n.d.
800119083	Group photo of Ed and his buddies, partially torn	n.d.
800119084	Framed formal portait of Ed in uniform. Caption: "Save this picture will ya."	11/1/1942

**Color Photos**

1988,  
1993, n.d.

800119085	Photo of the U.S.C.G.C <i>Woodrush</i> (2 copies)	n.d.
800119086	Photo of a ship (2 copies)	n.d.
800119087	Photo of a ceremony near water	n.d.
800119088	Photo of the Marine Corps War Memorial	n.d.
800119089	Ed and his wife looking at something on the ship	n.d.
800119090	Photo of a Coast Guard ship	n.d.
800119091	Ed sitting on a chair holding two signs welcoming USS <i>Calcaterra</i> shipmates and one bearing his name	n.d.
800119092	Ed and two other veteran friends posing on a ship (2 copies)	n.d.
800119093	Photo of Irene on a dock	n.d.
800119094	Ed and a fellow veteran on the ARM <i>Azueta</i> (2 copies)	n.d.
800119095	Ed and Irene posed in front of a model ship	n.d.
800119096	Ed, Irene, and two others posed in front of a model ship	n.d.
800119097	Photo of a Coast Guard lifeboat	n.d.
800119098	Another photo of a Coast Guard ship	n.d.
800119099	Photo of Ed posed on the ARM <i>Azueta</i> (2 copies)	n.d.
800119100	Another photo of Ed posed on theARM <i>Azueta</i> (2 copies)	n.d.

800119101	Photo of Ed and Irene on the ship	n.d.
800119102	Another photo of Ed and Irene on the ship	n.d.
800119103	Ed and two other veterans posed in an airport	n.d.
800119104	Group photo including Ed and Irene. Caption: "For E. Drenka, DE-390. Aloha! 9-4-88. K.L. Johnson, DE-741, USS Weaver"	9/4/1988
800119105	Photo of a polka band playing	n.d.
800119106	Group photo including Ed and Irene.	n.d.
800119107	Photo of veterans seated or standing near a table.	n.d.
800119108	Photo of Irene posed with a dummy.	n.d.
800119109	Another photo of veterans seated at a table.	n.d.
800119110	Photo of a veteran sitting at a table.	n.d.
800119111	A couple posed with a dummy	9/8/1993
800119112	Irene and Ed posed with a dummy	9/8/1993
800119113	Photo of a bunk on the ARM <i>Azueta</i> (2 copies)	n.d.
800119114	USS <i>Calcaterra</i> posters	n.d.
800119115	A photo taken from the ARM <i>Azueta</i> the main deck	n.d.
800119116	A photo of the ARM <i>Azueta</i> main deck (2 copies)	n.d.
800119117	Photo of the USCGC <i>Diligence</i>	n.d.
800119118	Another photo of the USCGC <i>Diligence</i>	n.d.
800119119	Photo of a Coast Guard ship (2 copies)	n.d.
800119120	Photo of the <i>Redwood</i> (2 copies)	n.d.
800119121	Photo of a ship's gun	n.d.
800119122	Photo taken from onboard ARM <i>Azueta</i> of the main deck	n.d.
800119123	Photo of Irene and Ed exploring the ship	n.d.
800119124	Photo of a mast	n.d.

800119125	Ed onboard a ship	n.d.
800119126	Ed posed in front of a U.S. Coast Guard emblem	n.d.
800119127	Ed and a friend below deck on a ship	n.d.
800119128	Ed on the ARM <i>Azueta</i>	n.d.
800119129	Ed on a dock posed in front of a ship	n.d.
800119130	A photo of a ship taken from shore	n.d.
800119131	Coast Guard ship docked(2 copies)	n.d.
800119132	Coast Guard ship	n.d.
800119133	Photo of showers onboard a ship	n.d.
800119134	Photo of a ship mast	n.d.
800119135	Photo of a ceremony involving military	n.d.

### **Large Photos**

1947, n.d.

800119136	Family portrait of Ed and his parents	n.d.
800119137	Colorized family portrait of Ed and his parents	n.d.
800119138	Young Ed posed holding a prayer book	n.d.
800119139	"Nostalgic Melodies" photo Franklin Roosevelt. Back: Babe Ruth	n.d.
800119140	Ed choir. Caption: "Merry Christmas to Edward from Al Wideman"	n.d.
800119141	Ed holding a gun	n.d.
800119142	Cutout photos of the USS <i>Calcaterra</i>	n.d.
800119143	Wedding photo of Ed and Irene	4/19/1947

### **Photos from Correspondence Series**

2012

800119144	Photo of Aileen Vertiz holding a sign with Ed's photo that says, "We Remember Ed." Caption: "Remembering Ed Veteran Dinner"	2/7/2012
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800119145 Photo of Aileen in front of a tank holding the same sign. Caption: "Veteran Dinner Remembering Ed." 2/7/2012

**Miscellaneous** n.d.

800119146 Photo of Ed in his Chicago Fire Dept. uniform n.d.

800119147 Photo of the "Our Dad, Our Hero" poster included in separations n.d.

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### Key Subjects

This collection is indexed under the following headings in the Library's online catalog. Researchers interested in materials about related topics, persons, or places should search the catalog using these subject headings.

### Names

Drenka, Edward. -- 1925-2012.  
Drenka, Edward P. -- Correspondence.

### Subjects

Destroyer escorts -- United States -- History -- 20th century.  
United States. -- Coast Guard -- History -- World War, 1939-1945.  
World War, -- 1939-1945.  
World War, -- 1939-1945. -- History -- Pictorial works.

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### Container List

Box	Folder	Item ID #	Title	Dates
1	1		<b>Series One: Government Documents</b>	<b>1946-1947, n.d.</b>
		800119001	Letter from U.S. Coast Guard awarding Ed Good Conduct Medal	4/30/1946
		800119002	U.S. Coast Guard Honorable Discharge Papers	4/30/1946
		800119003	Honorable Discharge Certificate U.S. Coast Guard	4/30/1946

(and photocopy)

800119004	State of Illinois Service Recognition Certificate	1947
800119005	U.S. Coast Guard Honorable Discharge Card	4/30/1946
800119006	U.S. Coast Guard Identification Card	n.d.
800119007	U.S. Coast Guard Satisfactory Service Card	n.d.
800119008	"The Cartoon Book" - Bureau of Publicity for the Liberty Loan	n.d.

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**Series Two: Correspondence**

**1947, 2012,  
n.d.**

800119009	Ed and Irene's Wedding Invitation	1947
800119010	Condolence to the Drenka family from Aileen Vertiz and family	2/15/2012
800119011	Letter from Aileen Vertiz to Patricia [Ed's daughter]	2/28/2012
800119012	Greeting card from Molly to Ed	n.d.
800119013	Greeting card from Rosalie McCafferty to Ed thanks for visiting D.C.	n.d.
800119014	Greeting card from Gillian Trumbull to Pat with photos enclosed [photos in Photography series]	n.d.
800119015	Blank Postcard: The USS <i>Scott</i>	n.d.

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**Series Three: Funeral Items**

**2012**

800119016	Funeral Card with Ed's name, dates of birth/death, and a prayer	Jan-12
800119017	Cumberland Chapels card with a short biography of Ed on the back	Jan-12
800119018	Honor Flight Chicago paper honoring Ed	Jan-12

<b>1</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>Series Four: Honor Flight Chicago</b>	<b>2010</b>
		800119019 Honor Flight Chicago commemorative program	2010
		800119020 Pamphlet with facts on the following memorials: World War II, Iwo Jima, Lincoln, Korean, Vietnam, and Washington Monument	4/21/2010
		800119021 Letter to Ed thanking him for being a part of the Honor Flight	12/23/2010
		800119022 Certificate in recognition of his service from Honor Flight Chicago	4/21/2010
		800119023 Article from LifeTimes newsletter about the Honor Flight	Nov/Dec-201 issue
		800119024 Honor Flight Chicago pamphlet	n.d.
		800119025 World War II Memorial pamphlet	n.d.
<b>1</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>Series Five: Coast Guard Items</b>	<b>1989, 1992, n.d.</b>
		800119026 Card with photo of a Coast Guard ship	n.d.
		800119027 Reprint of USS <i>Gendreau</i> mimeograph	n.d.
		800119028 U.S. Coast Guard symbol clipping	n.d.
		800119029 Photo of the USS <i>Slater</i> with poem on back	n.d.
		800119030 Program for Dedication of the U.S. Coast Guard Destroyer-Escort Sailors Monument	11/1/1992
		800119031 1989 Destroyer Escort Calendar	1989
		800119032 U.S. Coast Guard embroidered emblem	n.d.
		800119033 U.S. Coast Guard decal	n.d.
		800119034 U.S. Coast Guard stickers	n.d.
		800119035 Clipping of a photo of the CGC <i>Laurel</i>	n.d.

<b>1</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>Series Six: Newspapers</b>	<b>1941, 1991, 2009, n.d.</b>
	800119036	Honolulu Star Bulletin Extra, headline: "War: Oahu Bombed by Japanese Planes"	12/7/1941
	800119037	Southlake Times article: "What will we lose when the veterans of WW2 are gone"	9/24/2009
	800119038	Small Reprint of Chicago Daily Tribune front page on 8-Dec-1941: "U.S. and Japs at War."	12/1/1991
	800119039	Clipping: Ad for "Fighting: Destroyer Escorts of World War II" video	n.d.
<b>1</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>Series Seven: Miscellaneous</b>	<b>n.d.</b>
	800119040	Flags of the United States pamphlet	n.d.
	800119041	Clipping of a WWII poster	n.d.