



Brooklyn Navy Yard Development Corporation Archives  
Guide to the Vincentia Virginia Ferdon collection  
ca. 1940-1950  
MC/25

Brooklyn Navy Yard Development Corporation Archives  
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Description is in English.

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## Descriptive Summary

**Title:** Vincentia Virginia Ferdon collection

**Creator:** Virginia F. Shannon (nee Ferdon)

**Date(s):** ca. 1940-1950

**Quantity:** 1 box, 8 objects.

**Language of Materials:** English

**Call Number:** MC/25

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## Administrative/Biographical History

The Brooklyn Navy Yard, officially known as the New York Naval Shipyard, has its origins in the Federal government's purchase of the land adjacent to Wallabout Bay for \$40,000 in 1801, and the subsequent conversion of the land into an active U.S. Navy shipyard five years later in 1806. Over the course of its history, more than 230 naval warships and auxiliary vessels were built at the Yard. Additionally, during World War II alone, more than 5,000 ships were repaired, overhauled, or converted at the Brooklyn Navy Yard. The first ship built was the USS Ohio, launched in 1820, while the last ship launched was the USS Duluth (LPD-6) in 1965. Other historic vessels constructed or launched at the Navy Yard include Robert Fulton's steam frigate, the *Fulton*, the USS Arizona, the USS Missouri, and the USS Antietam.

In 1824, the Navy purchased an additional 25 acres near the Yard on which it established the Brooklyn Naval Hospital. The main hospital building was completed in 1838, and functioned until it was eventually closed in 1948. By 1850, the Hospital Annex was a self-contained parcel of land, walled-in, with a gatehouse, a laboratory, and a cemetery. In 1864, the Surgeon's Residence was constructed. When the

shipyard expanded during World War II, it took over the land of the former Wallabout Market and the physical separation between the Yard and the Hospital was eliminated.

During the Civil War, the Navy Yard employed about 6,000 people and by 1938 it provided jobs for over 10,000 people. During World War II nearly 70,000 people were employed at the Yard. By the end of the war, it had grown to encompass 291 acres with 270 major buildings, 24 miles of railroad tracks, 23,278 linear feet of crane tracks, 18 miles of paved roads, 16,495 feet of berthing space, 9 piers, 6 dry docks, and 22 shops housing 98 different trades.

In 1966, the Navy decommissioned the Yard and closed its active shipbuilding presence in Brooklyn, but retained residual administrative support functions as part of Naval Station New York, which occupied the former Hospital Annex and some adjacent buildings until it too was closed in 1989. In 1967, the City of New York acquired the Brooklyn Navy Yard for private commercial use, and eventually also acquired the former Naval Station Annex in 1993.

The Brooklyn Navy Yard industrial park was first managed by the Commerce Labor and Industry Corporation of Kings (CLICK), and later, in 1982, by the current Brooklyn Navy Yard Development Corporation (BNYDC). A private, non-profit local development corporation, BNYDC operates the Yard on behalf of the City with the aim of maintaining an industrial manufacturing base in Brooklyn.

Seatrain Shipbuilding was the main tenant under CLICK and was in operation at the Brooklyn Navy Yard from 1969 to 1979. During its operation the company produced four Very Large Crude Carriers (VLCCs), eight barges, one icebreaker barge and two roll-on/roll-off ferries (Ro-Ros). Another important, early tenant was Coastal Dry Dock & Repair Corporation which leased space at the Yard between 1971 and 1987 and continued to service Navy ships as a private contractor. Starting in the 1980s, BNYDC began a long-term effort to diversify the tenant base at the Yard. By 2001, under BNYDC, the tenant base had expanded to 275 companies that employed over 6,000 people.

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## Scope and Content

This collection contains Ferdon's ID badge (number A38003), a shop pin, two "E" pins, a small enamel US Navy pin, and three handmade bracelets made by Brooklyn Navy Yard workers. These items were acquired by Ferdon during her employment at the Brooklyn Navy Yard during WWII.

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## Related Materials

**Location of Copies:** Items in this collection may have been digitized and if so, are featured in [BNY Collections](#), the BNYDC Archives' digital library. Only those items that have digital reproductions contain an Object ID listed in the Container List below. Use the Object ID or title of the item when searching BNY Collections.

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## System of Arrangement

This collection contains 1 series: Personal Effects.

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## Access Points

New York Naval Shipyard  
Women  
Yard Workers  
Brooklyn

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## Administrative Information

**Accession Number(s):** 2011-D-007

**Acquisition Notes:** Virginia Shannon donated these items to the BNYDC Archives on July 15, 2011. This collection has a collection documentation file.

**Processing Notes:** This collection was processed by BNYDC Archivist/Records Manager Elizabeth Mc Gorty in April 2018. Material in this collection was digitized.

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## Access and Use

**Access Restrictions:** This collection is open for research.

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**Preferred Citation:** Published citations should take the following form: Identification of item, date (if known); Vincentia Virginia Ferdon collection; MC/25; Brooklyn Navy Yard Development Corporation Archives, Brooklyn, NY.

**Related Material at the BNYDC Archives:** N/A

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## Container List

### Series 1: Personal Effects

*Scope and Contents Note:* This series contains personal items acquired by Ferdon during her employment in the New York Naval Shipyard. Of note is her ID badge, which include her photograph and a unique ID number.

*Arrangement Note:* This series is not arranged.

Box 1 3-A-2-10	Title	Date	Object ID
Object 1	Bracelet cuffs (3)	Undated	
Object 2	ID badge	Undated	
Object 3	Shop pin, Navy Yard New York	Undated	
Object 4	"E For Production" pins (2)	Undated	13384
Object 5	US Navy pin	Undated	