

Introduction and Description

John S. Tate was born in New York on September 30, 1919. In later life he moved upstate to Warwick. Upon graduating from Maritime in 1939 with a concentration in the Deck Department course of studies, he began a long career as a merchant marine officer for a number of ship lines sailing to various ports of the country. This collection, measuring about one quarter of a cubic foot and stored in twenty folders, consists of ninety-seven documents, eighty-nine of which are Certificates of Discharge. These Certificates were issued by the Bureau of Marine Inspection and Navigation of the United States Coast Guard during the period from 1939 to 1980. Formats are essentially the same, and they measure ca. 8" x 4½ inches. Ports mentioned include New York, Baltimore and Houston. Among the names of ships found are the STEEL SURVEYOR and the STEEL AGE. These Certificates have been arranged chronologically. Some folders, as indicated below, contain more than one year. Following are the years covered. The number in parentheses indicates the number of documents for that year, or in those cases where a particular folder holds more than one year, the number of documents in that particular time span. 1939, 1940 (2), 1941 (3), 1942 (2), 1946-1948 (8), 1949 (5), 1950-51 (10), 1957-1959 (12), 1960-1961 (7), 1962 (6), 1963-1964 (8), 1965-1966, 1969 (7), 1970 (8), 1978-1979 (9), 1980 (1).

The Collection also contains the following allied documents. These are a Certificate of Graduation from the Sperry Gyroscope Company, Inc. awarded Tate on May 12, 1939; a Seaman's Certificate of Identification issued by the Dept. of Commerce, Bureau of Marine Inspection and Navigation on Sept. 14, 1939; a Certificate of Service to Able Seaman also issued by the aforementioned Bureau, Oct. 2, 1939; a Certificate of Efficiency to Lifeboatman again, issued by the above-mentioned Bureau, Oct. 2, 1939; and four United Coast Guard Licenses to United States Merchant Marine Office dated April 2, 1968, June 9, 1978, June 16, 1983, and May 20, 1988. The Licenses have a vignette, fairly elaborate, which depicts two or three different kinds of vessels (see attached illustration). Documents vary in measurement from about 8" x 5" to 9" x 8". Attached are four photocopies illustrating the types of documents found in this Collection.

John Stell Tate donated these personal papers to the Stephen B. Luce Library Archives in November 1996.