

# PRITZKER MILITARY MUSEUM & LIBRARY

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## Captain Jack D. Gordon Collection

**Creator:** Jack D. Gordon  
**Dates:** 1941-1985  
**Quantity:** .75 linear feet, 3 boxes  
**Acquisition:** Gordon/Spector estate, November 11, 2005.  
**Location:** 339999 (PAPERS 00001)  
**Citation:** [Document Title]. The Captain Jack D. Gordon Collection, [Box #, Folder #], Pritzker Military Museum & Library, Chicago, IL.  
**Language:** English  
**Finding Aid:** Written by Sarah Doherty, August 2007; 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

Captain Jack D. Gordon (formerly 1<sup>st</sup> Lt.) served as a doctor with the Army Medical Corps in the Pacific Theatre of World War II. He was called into service on July 5, 1941. On December 13, 1941 he was ordered to leave Fort McKinley to join the Manila Hospital Center in the Philippines. He was then moved to General Hospital No. 1 on the Bataan Peninsula. Gordon was taken prisoner by the Japanese after the fall of Bataan in April 1942. Initially after the Japanese capture of Bataan, Gordon, the medical team, and invalid soldiers were left unguarded without provisions at General Hospital No. 1. In subsequent months they survived by foraging in the surrounding area and from handouts of local civilians. However, on July 5, 1942 the Japanese moved these American and Filipino prisoners to Camp O'Donnell. The estimated death toll for interned prisoners at Camp O'Donnell ranges from 10,000 to 29,000 individuals. Gordon remained at this camp until January 1943 when he was transferred to Cabanatuan Camp No. 1 in the Philippines. He was kept at this camp until March 1944. Finally, Gordon was sent from the Philippines to Japanese Fukuoka Camp #3 on the Island of Kyushu. He remained at this camp until his liberation on September 13,

1945. However, his services were still required by the Army Medical Corps in Manila, thus he was not evacuated to the United States until October 10, 1945.

In his early life, Gordon resided in Council Bluffs, Iowa. He graduated from Abraham Lincoln High School in 1933 and was a lieutenant colonel in the Reserve Officer Training Corps. He received his medical degree from the University of Iowa Medical College in 1939. Upon completing his internship, he was called into service with the US Army Medical Corps in July 1941. Capt. Gordon was honorably discharged from service on August 29, 1946.

Upon his discharge from the Army Medical Corps, Gordon returned to Iowa to pursue an advanced medical degree and taught in the Department of Internal Medicine at the University of Iowa. On February 26, 1946 he married Dorothy Elizabeth Greene of Los Angeles, California. Greene was a graduate of Mount Zion Hospital School of Nursing in San Francisco and served in the Army Nurse Corps for four years. She was stationed in England for most of World War II. Upon her discharge from service, she attended Lux College of Arts in San Francisco and completed her studies before joining Gordon in Iowa City. Gordon later joined the medical staff at Mount Zion Hospital in San Francisco.

In the next few decades, Gordon was the Assistant Chief of Medicine and a pioneer in the diagnosis and treatment of alcoholism in general hospitals. In October 1961, he was invited, as an expert lecturer, to attend a New Hampshire medical conference on the topics of alcoholism prevention, diagnosis, and treatment.

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## **Scope and Content of the Collection**

The collection contains personal papers of Capt. Jack Gordon as well as material pertaining to the POW experience in the Pacific Theatre during WWII and general coverage of events surrounding WWII. The bulk of the collection covers the years 1941-45, although there are some later materials concerning Capt. Gordon's postwar civilian life and subsequent studies of the POW experience during WWII. Capt. Gordon's personal papers include correspondence with his family during his internment, Western Union telegrams, a customs declaration, immunization records, and bank records. In addition, there are newspaper clippings referencing Capt. Gordon from various publications which discuss his time of internment, homecoming, and postwar civilian life as a teaching and practicing doctor.

Also included in the collection are special orders from a hospital in Clinton, Iowa, special orders from Philippines Department at Fort Mills, and an affidavit from Rizal, Philippines referencing the missing personal possessions of Capt. Jack Gordon. In addition, the collection contains documents and publications that pertain to WWII and Korean War prisoners. There are two Johns Hopkins University published studies from

the American Journal of Epidemiology which discuss the long-term health effects of WWII and Korean War internment on former POWs. There is also a copy of a transcript from a 1982 NBC broadcast special on the Bataan Death March.

There is a publication from the Naval Health Research Center which discusses all the prominent literature written on the long-term psychological and physical effects on POWs. Also, there are reports from the American Ex-Prisoners of War, Inc. National Medical Research Committee which examine conditions and aftermath of Di Ju Nana Bunshyo and the Fukuoka Military District in Japan.

Additionally, there is a collection of medical records/patient progress reports dated from 1944-1945, most of which are signed by Capt. Gordon. Majority of the patients were admitted for general weakness, fatigue, and various tropical diseases. The most common of which are as follows: dysentery, diarrhea, beriberi, fever, malaria, pellagra, pneumonia, and scurvy. Also included with the progress notes are some timetable/schedules in Japanese.

The collection includes a report from the Liaison & Research Branch of the American Prisoner of War Information Bureau from July 1946 which discusses Fukuoka Camp No. 3 on the Island of Kyushu, Japan. Also, there are two reports dated November 1945 from the Office of the Provost Marshal General concerning the Cabanatuan camps. In addition, there is an abstract for a proposed study on the mental and physical well-being of former Wake Island POWs. There is also a brief history of Wake Island. Furthermore, there is a copy of a Rehabilitation News bulletin dated November 20, 1970 (Vol. XV, No. 8) that focuses on POWs from WWII, Korea, and Vietnam.

There is a copy of "The Oryoku Maru Story" which includes a history of the POW ships Oryoku Maru, Brazil Maru, and Enoura Maru. It also covers the trials of the Japanese held responsible for crimes committed against the American POWs, a detailed description of the voyage from the Philippines to Japan and a list of POWs on board as well as survivors. There is also a publication abstract announcement of a book entitled "Surrender and Survival" that was published in 1985.

The collection contains some newspapers. There are copies of the San Francisco Times from the first month of American involvement in WWII, which roughly date from December 8, 1941 through January 2, 1942. In addition, there is a copy of the Los Angeles Times from August 15, 1945 announcing the Japanese acceptance of terms of surrender. Additionally, there is a May 1983 edition of the San Francisco Philippine News which contains a special section featuring a strategic history of the Bataan-Corregidor region during WWII.

There is an annotated bibliography of publications concerning the Philippines in WWII from December 8, 1941 through July 4, 1946 which was published by Cornell University in 1977.

## Arrangement

The Collection arrived with no discernable arrangement and was rearranged in a more efficient working order by PMML staff. The primary collection is contained within two archival boxes and is accompanied by one box of newspapers and clippings.

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## Restrictions

Patient Medical Records and Progress Notes from 1941-45 (Box 1, Folder 7) are restricted until January 1, 2021 as per §552a.

## Rights

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## Related Collections

Maj. Gen. Harry Hill Bandholtz Papers (1891-1943)  
Richard T. Lockhart Collection

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## Separations

Several newspapers accompanied this collection, and are currently housed separate from the main collection. These items are in the PML Rare Serials Collection, in alphabetical order, and include:

Title: *San Francisco Times*

Dates: December 8, 19, 22-27, 30, 31, 1941

Title: *San Francisco News*

Date: December 9, 1941

Title: *Los Angeles Times*

Date: August 15, 1945 (VJ Day)

Title: *San Francisco Chronicle*

Date: August 9, 1974 (Nixon resignation)

Title: *Philippine News* (San Francisco)

Date: 1985 (Corregidor Special)

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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.

## Subjects

Bataan, Battle of, Philippines, 1942  
Bataan, (Philippines : Province)—History  
Prisoners of war—Philippines—Bataan (Province)  
Prisoners of war—United States—Biography  
World War, 1939-1945—Campaigns—Philippines—Corregidor Island  
World War, 1939-1945—Personal narratives, American  
World War, 1939-1945—Prisoners and prisons, Japanese

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## Detailed Description of the Collection

### Box One

<b>Folder One</b>	Prisoner of War Correspondence
<b>Folder Two</b>	Restricted Special Orders, War Crimes Department, and Philippines Affidavit
<b>Folder Three</b>	Personal Civilian Records of Gordon
<b>Folder Four</b>	Newspaper Clippings
<b>Folder Five</b>	<i>NBC Reports</i> , "Bataan: the Forgotten Hell" (Dec. 5, 1982)
<b>Folder Six</b>	Naval Research Health Center POW Study
<b>Folder Seven</b>	POW Patient Medical Records ( <i>RESTRICTED</i> )
<b>Folder Eight</b>	Reports on American POWs in Japanese Camps and Personal Journal

**Box Two**

**Folder Nine**

*The Oryoku Story* and letter from Warren Wilson, MD

**Folder Ten**

*The Philippines in World War II: an Annotated Bibliography*

**Folder Eleven**

*Death March* by Donald Knox (publication abstract)

**Box Three**

Separated Newspapers and Clippings