

MsSC 122

John Tanghe Papers

Biography

John Tanghe was born on May 21, 1920 in Sunnyside, Washington. Growing up on a farm in Outlook, Washington, Tanghe moved to Tacoma in 1939 to attend business college and eventually found work with a local builders supply firm, Johnson and Lundgren. Drafted into the Army in March 1942, Tanghe served 33 months in North Africa as a depot-supply clerk. He came back to Tacoma in November 1945 and worked for his former employer, Art Lundgren, until retiring in 1985.

Scope and Content

The papers of John Tanghe cover the years 1940 to 1987, focusing mostly on the period of Tanghe's service in the Army from 1942 to 1945 and include correspondence, U.S. Army documentation, newspapers, and photographs.

Correspondence constitutes the bulk of material in this collection, and most of the correspondence is between John Tanghe and his parents during his three and a half years in the service. Subjects addressed in the correspondence include living conditions on the bases, Army testing and the point system, furloughs to New York and Casablanca, local reactions to Allied victories, impressions of the other servicemen as a whole, KP and prison guard duty, impressions of the North African landscape and peoples, and military-inspired celebrations overseas such as the "Arab Bowl." Other correspondents include other family members, co-workers at the Johnson and Lundgren Company, Army buddies, and a pen-pal.

INCLUSIVE DATES: 1940-1987

RESTRICTIONS: None

VOLUME: 1.5 Linear Ft.

ACCESSION NO. 1997.74

BOX 1: Correspondence

1. Correspondence: Elizabeth Anderson (a worker at Johnson/Lundgren) to John Tanghe Jr. 1943
2. Correspondence: Belden Bidwell (a worker at Johnson/Lundgren) to John Tanghe

- Jr. 1943-44 (pin-up girl pictures)
3. Correspondence: Bill Caruthers to John Tanghe Jr. 1943
 4. Correspondence: Laura Dawson (aunt) to John Tanghe Jr. 1943
 5. Correspondence: Byron J. Diltz (Army buddy) to John Tanghe Jr. 1943-44 (“Arab Bowl” game on newsreel)
 6. Correspondence: Robert J. Donovan (Army buddy) to John Tanghe Jr. 1946-82 (G.I. Bill Educational Stipend)
 7. Correspondence: Al Duenwald (a worker at Johnson/Lundgren) to John Tanghe Jr. 1943-1944
 8. Correspondence: Elsie to John Tanghe Jr. January-December 1940
 9. Correspondence: Elsie to John Tanghe Jr. January-December 1941
 10. Correspondence: Gloria Erwin (pen pal introduced to Tanghe by Oliver Thornton) to John Tanghe Jr. 1942-44
 11. Correspondence: Annarose Evenson (sister) to Parents. Undated
 12. Correspondence: Annarose Evenson (sister) to John Tanghe Jr. 1943-44
 13. Correspondence: Arthur Geiger (business friend) to John Tanghe Jr. 1943-44 (shortage of many woods for civilian use)
 14. Correspondence: Richard Geiger to John Tanghe Jr. 1944 (traveling USO tours in the Pacific)
 15. Correspondence: Mrs. Grunig (family friend) to John Tanghe Jr. 1944
 16. Correspondence: Jack Harris (Army buddy) to John Tanghe Jr. 1943-44 (“Zoot Suits on the Loose”)
 17. Correspondence: Homer Hart (Army buddy) to John Tanghe Jr. 1945-67
 18. Correspondence: Al Johnson (of Johnson and Lungren) to John Tanghe Jr. 1943 (civilian defense test, rationing, Victory Garden)
 19. Correspondence: Grandmother Jones to John Tanghe Jr. 1943-44
 20. Correspondence: Edgar Kahl (family friend) to Tanghe’s Parents. 1943
 21. Correspondence: KIT Radio (Yakima) to Tanghe’s Parents. July 10, 1944 (broadcast news item about Tanghe Jr. in North Africa, including script of the broadcast)
 22. Correspondence: Eph Klapstein (a worker at Johnson/Lundgren) to John Tanghe Jr. 1943
 23. Correspondence: Bessie Lamb (aunt) to John Tanghe Jr. 1943-44 (Gas Rationing)
 24. Correspondence: Art Lundgren to John Tanghe Jr. 1943 (Victory Gardens, draft of all the “young blood” in the business into the Army)
 25. Correspondence: Isa Means (aunt) to John Tanghe Jr. 1943-44
 26. Correspondence: Irma Miller (aunt) to John Tanghe Jr. 1943-44
 27. Correspondence: Irma Miller (aunt) to Tanghe’s Parents. 1942
 28. Correspondence: Parents to John Tanghe Jr. January-December 1942
 29. Correspondence: Parents to John Tanghe Jr. April-May 1943
 30. Correspondence: Parents to John Tanghe Jr. June-July 1943
 31. Correspondence: Parents to John Tanghe Jr. August-September 1943
 32. Correspondence: Parents to John Tanghe Jr. October-November 1943

33. Correspondence: Parents to John Tanghe Jr. December 1943
34. Correspondence: Parents to John Tanghe Jr. January-February 1944
35. Correspondence: Parents to John Tanghe Jr. March-April 1944
36. Correspondence: Parents to John Tanghe Jr. May-June 1944
37. Correspondence: Parents to John Tanghe Jr. July-August 1944
38. Correspondence: Parents to John Tanghe Jr. September-October 1944
39. Correspondence: Parents to John Tanghe Jr. November-December 1944
40. Correspondence: Parents to John Tanghe Jr. January-December 1945

BOX 2: Correspondence

1. Correspondence: Clifford Ramstad to John Tanghe Jr. 1944
2. Correspondence: Mrs. M. Recob to John Tanghe Jr. 1943 (boarding house for soldiers' wives)
3. Correspondence: Nathan Sheinfeld (Army buddy) to John Tanghe Jr. 1945-46
4. Correspondence: Bill Sims (Army buddy) to John Tanghe Jr. 1946-57
5. Correspondence: Lloyd Southwick to John Tanghe Jr. 1943
6. Correspondence: Ned Stadnicki to John Tanghe Jr. 1946-67
7. Correspondence: John Tanghe Jr. to Laura Dawson. 1943
8. Correspondence: John Tanghe Jr. to Grandmother Jones. 1942
9. Correspondence: Tanghe to Parents. January-December 1940
10. Correspondence: Tanghe to Parents. January-December 1941
11. Correspondence: Tanghe to Parents. January-February 1942 (physical examination at the Armory, opted for Army after almost considering Navy)
12. Correspondence: Tanghe to Parents. March-April 1942 (resignation from Tacoma job, departure for the Presidio of Monterey-then the Ordnance Replacement Training Center in Aberdeen, Maryland, older nature of fellow trainees noted, churches on the base, work in the orderly room, typing test for Depot and Supply unit)
13. Correspondence: Tanghe to Parents. May-June 1942 (left Maryland for Savanna Section Proving Ground-Illinois, sick call and in hospital, placement tests, Western Defense Command study, salary)
14. Correspondence: Tanghe to Parents. July-August 1942 (Army's bureaucracy, KP duty, photos of the barracks sent to parents, USO Club, censored mail, difficulty of finding stamps on base, weekend furlough to NYC)
15. Correspondence: Tanghe to Parents. September-October 1942 (salary and insurance, NYC trip, protective clothing designed for mustard gas attacks, transfer to Indiantown Gap-Pennsylvania, labor shortage in Yakima)
16. Correspondence: Tanghe to Parents. November-December 1942 (Thanksgiving in NYC with Uncle Ollie, French and Spanish classes, application for air cadet, package from home arrived in bad shape)
17. Correspondence: Tanghe to Parents. January-February 1943 (prison guard duty-

describes prisoners as “Negroes” and “pretty tough customers,”
“Army growing too fast-too many inexperienced officers,” WACs
on the post)

18. Correspondence: Tanghe to Parents. March-April 1943 (Arrived in North Africa, saw an American movie there)
19. Correspondence: Tanghe to Parents. May-June 1943 (insurance, visit to a Mosque-
“Arabs like the Indians,” agriculture of North Africa)
20. Correspondence: Tanghe to Parents. July-August 1943 (getting film developed in
North Africa, bed-bug elimination)
21. Correspondence: Tanghe to Parents. September-October 1943 (visit to a French
Methodist Church and the ruins of Tlemcen)
22. Correspondence: Tanghe to Parents. November-December 1943 (radio
transmissions from Europe, hunting in North Africa, *Stars and
Stripes Magazine*)
23. Correspondence: Tanghe to Parents. January-February 1944 (“Arab Bowl” football
game, Midge’s radio program from Berlin)
24. Correspondence: Tanghe to Parents. March-April 1944 (weekly candy and soda
rations, money bet on a basketball game)
25. Correspondence: Tanghe to Parents. May-June 1944 (Mother’s Day V-mail form,
rest camp, casualties known by Tanghe or his friends)
26. Correspondence: Tanghe to Parents. July-August 1944 (arrival of Tacoma
newspapers, enlisted men’s clubs)
27. Correspondence: Tanghe to Parents. September-October 1944 (friend taken as a
POW, quality of the food, “tent city”)
28. Correspondence: Tanghe to Parents. November-December 1944 (trip to Casablanca,
riding camels)
29. Correspondence: Tanghe to Parents. January-February 1945 (temporary duty detail)
30. Correspondence: Tanghe to Parents. March-April 1945 (battle souvenirs-German
bayonet, base censor developing film)
31. Correspondence: Tanghe to Parents. May-June 1945 (Celebration over the fall of
Berlin, Army points needed to head home, rest camp, hunting
octopi, destroying worthless ammo)
32. Correspondence: Tanghe to Parents. July-August 1945 (Possibility for 10-day
furlough to Rome, pet birds, riot stemming from French Air Force’s
dealings with local Police, the “Hanford” People, tedium, Army
point system, furloughs to various African destinations by fellow
soldiers, thievery of the local Arabs)
33. Correspondence: Tanghe to Parents. September-October 1945 (Effects of V-J Day,
hunting and fishing trip, furlough to French Riviera)
34. Correspondence: Tanghe to Parents. November 1945 (Coming back home!)
35. Correspondence: John Tanghe Jr. to Parents. Undated

BOX 3: Correspondence, Documents, Ephemera, Forms, Newspaper Clippings, Photographs, a Poem

1. Correspondence: Oliver Thornton (Uncle) to John Tanghe Jr. 1943-45 (Fear of Russian takeover of Europe after War)
2. Correspondence: Oliver Thornton (Uncle) to John Tanghe Jr. Undated
3. Correspondence: Bill Turner (Army buddy, also Ellen Turner, wife and widow) to John Tanghe Jr. 1944-87
4. Correspondence: Varney to John Tanghe Jr. 1945-46
5. Documents: Various Army orders, affidavits, and classifications. 1942-1944
6. Ephemera:
7. Forms: Blank Tax Forms for 1942, 1943.
8. Newspaper Clippings. (Mostly pertaining to news during WW II, local servicemen returning home, etc. Also stories about the sale of a farm in Sunnyside.) 1941-1973
9. Photographs: Fishing trip.

The photographs in this collection number about 150 images with some duplication. About one-third of the photographs are identified and most were taken in North Africa, where Tanghe photographed his army buddies, the local landscape, the Army base where he was stationed, and the inhabitants of North Africa.

10. Photographs: Interior views of a base in North Africa.
11. Photographs: Military depot base 150.0. 1943-44
12. Photographs: Misc.
13. Photographs: Misc. Unidentified people.
14. Photographs: North African landscapes.
15. Photographs: Photo of Tanghe used in a newspaper article and displayed in a Sunnyside drugstore window.
16. Photographs: Street scenes in North Africa.
17. Photographs: Tanghe at U.S. Army training bases.
18. Photographs: Tanghe with family at home during service.
19. Photographs: Tanghe's Army buddies in North Africa.
20. Photographs: Tanghe in North Africa. (photos of himself)
21. Photographs: WACs in North Africa.
22. Poem: Ode to Tanghe and Two Other Servicemen. Author and date unknown.

Box 4: Newspapers

(Housed in oversize flat file storage)

53 copies of the *Stars and Stripes* Newspaper (Mediterranean Edition). 1943-45

Yank: The Army Weekly. December 29, 1944.