

**WW2 USN stainless ships mess tray, marked
CARROLLTON MFG CO USN**



My Uncle had served on LSI (L) 350 @ Utah Beach Jun 6, 1944, as a Petty Officer 1st Class SC. USCG.

Including subsequent additional crossings to Normandy supporting Operation Overlord, and later Operation Dragoon, the Southern France Invasion.

I thought it'd be cool to have something my late "Uncle Cub" would have recognized.

A **Carrollton Mfg. Co. USN stainless steel mess tray** is exactly the sort of everyday shipboard item a sailor aboard **LSI(L)-350** would have encountered during World War II.

The Navy and Coast Guard used stainless compartment trays extensively because they

were durable, easy to sanitize, and could survive constant use aboard transports, landing ships, and other fleet vessels.

From a collector's perspective, what makes it interesting isn't necessarily rarity, but the direct association with the environment in which my uncle served:

- **Utah Beach, June 6, 1944 (D-Day)** during Operation Overlord.
- Subsequent cross-Channel troop and supply movements supporting the Normandy campaign.
- Later participation in **Operation Dragoon**, the invasion of Southern France in August 1944.

A Petty Officer First Class (SC) would have spent countless hours aboard ship between operations. Every sailor aboard had to eat, and trays like the Carrollton-manufactured examples were standard naval equipment. While there's no way to prove a specific tray was ever aboard LSI(L)-350, it is certainly the type of mess gear he would have recognized instantly.

For military collectors, artifacts tied to a relative's branch and era sometimes become more meaningful than medals or weapons because they're tangible reminders of daily life.

- Routine meals at sea.
- Long Atlantic crossings.
- Staging periods before and after amphibious operations.
- The endless "hurry up and wait" that accompanied invasion preparations.

This tray was reasonably priced and clearly marked "**USN**" with the Carrollton manufacturer's stamp; it makes a great companion piece to my uncle's story. It's the sort of object that helps visualize what life aboard a crowded invasion transport was actually like, beyond the historic headlines.

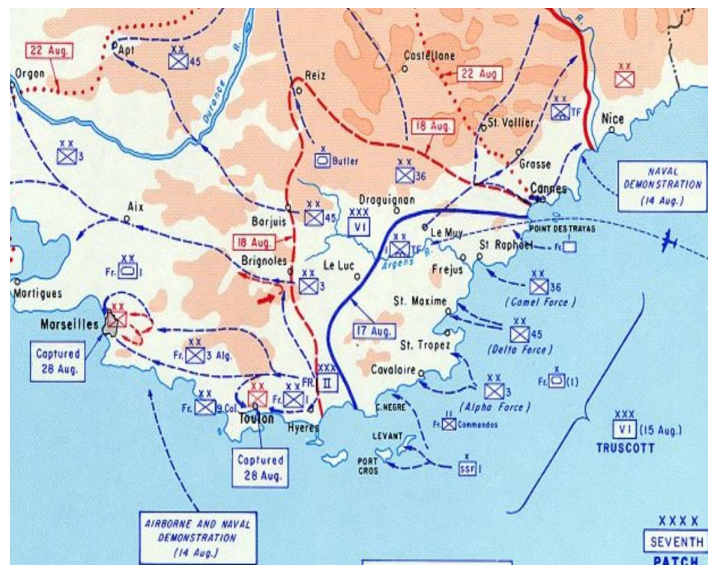
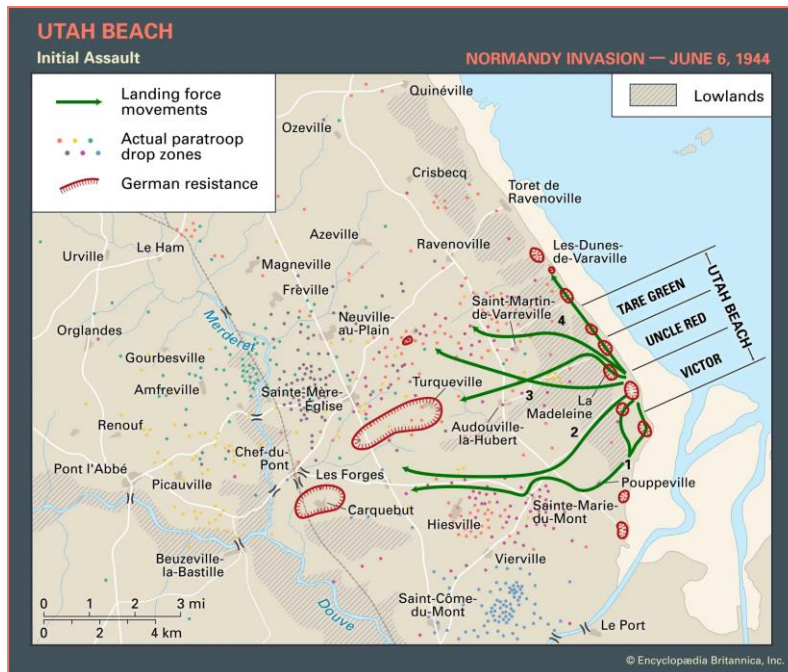
As a military-history display, pairing the tray with:



- A photo of LSI(L)-350,



- USCG rate (PO1/sc),
- Small maps showing Utah Beach and Southern France,



The Operation Dragoon Landing

would turn a simple mess tray into a very personal tribute to "Uncle Cub" and his role in two of the major amphibious operations of 1944.

In WWII USCG ratings, **SC** = **Ship's Cook**,

The Ship's Cook First Class (SC1) wasn't just part of the ship's company; he was the one responsible for feeding the crew aboard LSI (L) -350, that was a critical job.

That actually makes the USN mess tray even more meaningful. A sailor might have used a tray like that three times a day.

The Ship's Cook would have seen hundreds of them pass through the galley and serving line, during the buildup to D-Day, the cross-Channel runs, and later Operation Dragoon. He probably handled stacks of trays, supervised serving meals, organized food stores, and worked long hours keeping the crew fed.

From a personal-history standpoint, I'd almost argue the tray has a stronger connection to him than many common military collectibles:

- A mess tray is something he almost certainly handled regularly as part of his rating.
- The "USN" marking puts it directly in the WW2 naval environment he served in.
- Carrollton Manufacturing was one of several wartime contractors producing stainless mess gear for ship use.

It's the sort of object a Ship's Cook First Class would have instantly recognized and worked with every day.

This WWII USN mess tray represents the daily work of feeding the sailors who took part in the Allied invasions of Europe.

It turns an ordinary piece of galley equipment into a tangible link to my uncle's wartime service. For family history, that's hard to beat.

. The ship's galley's primary responsibility as the Ship's Cook First Class, focused on feeding roughly two dozen fellow crewmen rather than running a massive troop-feeding operation. On a small vessel, that would have meant:

- Planning and preparing meals.
- Managing food stores and supplies.
- Baking and cooking.
- Keeping the galley sanitary.
- Working closely with the rest of the crew, whom he would have known personally.

In that light, the mess tray becomes less a symbol of "feeding the invasion force" and more a reminder of the everyday life that kept the ship functioning. Every sailor aboard depended on the cook.

What I find appealing about the tray is that it represents something my uncle almost certainly interacted with in a practical sense. As a collector, I know how much more

meaningful an artifact can be when it connects directly to a person's actual duties rather than just the broader war.

A WWII-marked **CARROLLTON MFG. CO. USN** tray displayed with a photo and a brief note about:

- SC1/c (Ship's Cook First Class)
- LSI(L)-350
- Utah Beach, 6 June 1944
- Southern France, August 1944

would tell a very authentic story. Not the glamorous story of generals and battles, but the real story of one sailor whose job was making sure the crew was fed and able to do theirs.

In many ways, that tray is exactly the kind of object a Ship's Cook would have had a closer relationship with than any weapon or combat gear. It fits his actual wartime role remarkably well.

