

U.S.S. Marblehead (CL-12)

Marblehead Biography Arthur Edward 'Ed' Rood Jr.



Ed Rood, Boys High School,
Decatur GA 1933

Photo: Heather L. Gray via
Ancestry.com

Arthur Edward 'Ed' Rood Jr. was born on 18 Dec 1916 in Laurel, Jones County, MS to Arthur Edward Rood Sr. (1876-1958), a bookkeeper from McBride, Montcalm County, MI, and homemaker Grace Bean (1879-1965) from Freeman, Crawford County, WI. The last of four children, Ed's siblings were: Carleton Arthur Rood (1901-1903), Marguerite 'Margaret' Ellen Rood (1902-1969) and Evelyn Leona Rood (1906-1979). Eventually, Ed's family moved to Georgia, and the photo above was taken while he was a student and member of the ROTC at the Boys School in Decatur, GA. In 1939, Ed earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Commerce from the University of Georgia in Athens.

It is there that he probably met his future wife, Lula Amelia Golucke (1916-2006), who earned a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Education, also in 1939. Lula was born in Crawfordville, GA on 17 Jun 16, the daughter of long-time Taliaferro County Superior Court Clerk, Ralph Wesley Golucke, and Mary McCord Golucke. Ed and Lula married in June 1943 and would have four children: Ralph Edward (1943-2005), Charles "Charlie" Golucke (1945-1991), Amelia Ann (1948-), and Mary McCord (1948-).



Amelia Golucke at the
University of Georgia 1939

Photo: Heather L. Gray /
via Ancestry.com

Because officers usually do not appear in ship muster rolls, it is difficult to track their careers. Such was the case with Ed, however, the June 1942 Atlanta Constitution article from which the photo on page 3 was taken, indicated that Ed joined the Navy in 1939 as a Chief Yeoman and was commissioned an Ensign in 1940 after attending Navy supply officers' school. In November 1940, he joined light cruiser [USS Marblehead \(CL-12\)](#), affectionately referred to as *Marby* by her crew.

Marby was the third of [three Navy ships](#) named after Marblehead, MA, the birthplace of the American Navy. After joining the Asiatic Fleet in January 1938, she usually wintered in the Philippines and summered in China. She periodically visited exotic locales such as British-controlled Rangoon, Burma (today's Yangon, Myanmar); French-controlled Saigon, (today's Ho Chi Minh City); and several Chinese ports in addition to Shanghai and Tsingtao. However, in late-September 1940, her departure from Tsingtao (after which the famous beer is named) ended her long association with China as Japan progressively seized control of all major Chinese ports except Hong Kong. As a result, Ed saw few of the ports mentioned above.

Other than a cruise to Guam in January, *Marby* spent nearly all of 1941 in Philippine waters. By then, like many of her sister ships in the Asiatic Fleet, *Marby* was obsolete by the naval standards of the early 1940s, particularly when compared to Japanese ships in her class. Her only advantage was speed. For the rest of the year, intense battle training at sea was the focus of *Marby*'s skipper, Captain A.G. Robinson, and the rest of the ship's leadership.

As Japan-US tensions mounted in late-November 1941, Admiral Thomas Hart, commander of the Asiatic Fleet, ordered its dispersal from Manila, Philippines ahead of anticipated hostilities. By the evening of 27 Nov 41, *Marby* was anchored off Jolo Island at the southwestern end of the Philippine archipelago not far from Borneo. The ship was darkened for increased security.

The saga of the *USS Marblehead*, described in detail in the 1944 book, [Where Away – A Modern Odyssey](#), unfolds two days later, on 29 Nov 41, with *Marby* anchored farther southwest, off Tarakan Island, northeast Borneo, Netherlands East Indies (NEI; today's Indonesia). At the time, Tarakan's beaches were lined with cables and pillboxes to discourage enemy landing parties.

Unbeknownst to Admiral Hart and the men under his command, the Asiatic Fleet's days were numbered. Despite significant disadvantages in numbers, technology, firepower, and air cover, in the remaining four

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months of its existence, that fleet and its crews would play a heroic, yet tragic role in delaying the Japanese conquest of Southeast Asia. Nearly all those ships would be lost, but the *Marby* would defy the odds and the Japanese propaganda that reported her sunk on multiple occasions.

On 8 Dec 41 (at Tarakan, *Marby* was west of the International Date Line), at 03:28 hours, *Marby* received word of the attack on Pearl Harbor. Her General Quarters alarm blared moments later and the [crew's response](#) foretold the spirit and superb training that would later save her. At dawn, the ship sailed farther southwest ahead of the Japanese onslaught which would hit the neighboring Philippines within hours. The following day, she was refueling at the oil port of Balikpapan, Borneo.

By Christmas Day 1941, *Marby* was at the Dutch Naval Base at Surabaya, Java, NEI, and her skipper, [Captain Arthur Granville Robinson](#), granted the crew Christmas leave despite the threat of Japanese air attack. It would be their last break for some time.

On the last day of 1941, *Marby* was crossing the Flores Sea to Darwin, Australia, escorting the [MS Maréchal Joffre](#), a Vichy French (Axis) ship brazenly captured by American naval aviators and ground crews in Manila Bay and used to escape the Japanese invasion. This little known but inspiring episode in American Naval History resulted in *MS Marechal Joffre's* conversion into the [USS Rochambeau \(AP-63\)](#).

By 2 Jan 42, *Marby* had become "[Radio Darwin](#)" in the northern Australian backwater that would serve as temporary base for surviving Allied ships.

On 8 Jan, Ed and his shipmates sailed north as part of an Allied initiative to stall Japanese aggression in Java. On 24 Jan, *Marby* covered the retreat of American destroyers (Paul Jones, Parrott, Pope and John D. Ford) after their successful night attack on Japanese forces in the [Battle of Balikpapan](#).

On 4 Feb 42, while enroute to another attack on Japanese forces, *Marby* took two direct bomb hits and a very damaging near-miss from a squadron of Japanese bombers off the north coast of Java in what became known as the [Battle of Makassar Strait](#). Thus began, for most of the *Marby's* crew, the "escape from the jaws of death." Ablaze, rapidly taking on water and steaming in an uncontrollable, very predictable circle because her rudder had been jammed by one of the direct hits, *Marby* seemed doomed. Instead of finishing her off, the Japanese assumed the ocean would complete what their bombs had begun, and they went after bigger prey – the heavy cruiser *USS Houston (CA-30)*.

Japan's Imperial high command wasted no time in reporting the *Marby* sunk, however, and in the long tradition of [fake news](#), they got everything wrong – the date, the location and nearest land mass, and even the water-body (it was the Java Sea). Most importantly, they got the "sunk" part wrong too!

In the ensuing 70-hours of non-stop toil, the crew quelled fires, manned bucket brigades, bailing around the clock, and engineered ingenious repairs which kept *Marby* afloat. The dead were identified, and the wounded treated. On the evening of 4 Feb 42, lacking rudder control, Captain Robinson used *Marby's* "screws" to steer her through the treacherous Lombok Strait east of Bali in darkness and rainstorms.

Early on the morning of 6 Feb 42, *Marby* limped into the Indian Ocean port of Tjilatjap, on Java's south coast (Sir Francis Drake had stopped at this fishing port on his sail through the Dutch East Indies 362 years earlier in 1580; known today as Cilacap, it is a major oil facility for the Indonesia's national oil company, Pertamina). After arrival, *Marby* transferred her seriously wounded to the local Dutch hospital and the care of [Dr. Corydon Wassell](#). She buried her dead and got only rudimentary repairs at the lightly equipped port.

On 10 Feb 42, *Marby* began a long, [perilous journey home](#), the first leg of which involved crossing of the eastern Indian Ocean to the world's second largest natural deep-water port, Trincomalee in British-held Ceylon (today's Sri Lanka). Two British officers watching her depart wagered that she would break apart before ever seeing port again. In contrast, a Dutch commander ordered his vessel's band to play the *Star-Spangled Banner*.

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Marby arrived at Trincomalee on 21 Feb 42 but found little there to improve her seaworthiness. During her stay, in the early hours of the morning of 1 Mar 42, the Asiatic Fleet ceased to exist with the sinking of her flagship, the *USS Houston (CA-30)*, in the [Battle of Sunda Strait](#) (which separates Sumatra from Java). Undaunted, the following day the *Marby* continued westward across the other half of the Indian ocean, now the only substantial vessel remaining of the once renowned Asiatic Fleet.

Through superb leadership and the constant toil of her crew, the supposedly sunk *Marby* continued to defy the odds and Japanese propaganda sailing down between Madagascar and Mozambique, and into Durban, South Africa on 15 Mar 42. Finally, in a moment of relief - the ship was now beyond Japanese reach, in an Allied port, and not yet in the Atlantic, where German U-boats posed a real threat. Shore leave was granted.

On 19 Mar 42, *Marby* arrived in Port Elizabeth, South Africa to bury shipmates [Bull Aschenbrenner](#) and [Bernard Joseph "Ski" Wardzinski](#) following their untimely deaths the day before while inspecting the ship's forward hold - Aschenbrenner had gone to Wardzinski's rescue, but neither survived. The ship then moved on to the Royal Navy Base at Simonstown, South Africa for extensive repairs, arriving on 24 Mar 42 after traveling 9,243 miles from Lombok Straits where she had first entered the Indian Ocean. A [plaque at Selborne dock](#) at Simonstown still commemorates *Marby's* arrival in 1942).

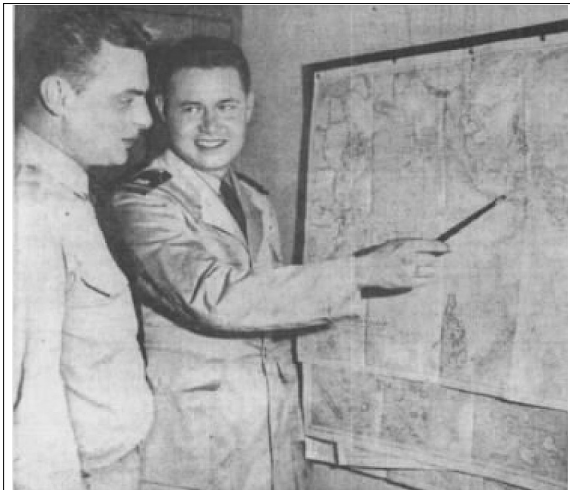
From South Africa, *Marby* crossed the South Atlantic to Recife, Brazil where she met a hostile Allied reception. Having been reported sunk multiple times, Allied personnel in port suspected a German ruse to sneak in and destroy the facilities there. The situation was resolved when a Chief from *USS Milwaukee (CL-5)*, then in Recife, who was known to *Marby* Radioman [Ray Delos Kester Sr.](#), confirmed that the ship was really the *USS Marblehead*.

Following re-provisioning at Recife, *Marby* embarked on the final leg home. On 4 May 42, after sailing in crippled condition 20,589 miles (per Radioman Kester's [deck log analysis](#)), she received a hero's welcome in New York harbor and entered Brooklyn Navy Yard for a massive overhaul. As with all the parents of the sailors on board *Marby*, throughout the long voyage, Ed's family thought he was dead until he called them with the good news the day after the ship made New York. Other than the trauma of seeing friends aboard the ship die or suffer badly from burns, Ed appears to have come through the action off Java unscathed. Not long after the ship's arrival, on 15 Jun 42, Ed was promoted to Lt. Junior Grade (Lt. Jg.).

During *Marby's* five-and-a-half-month overhaul in New York, her officers and enlisted men visited their families, some got married, and several spoke at various gatherings around the US. Ed did all three.

While visiting his family, Amelia, friends, Ed spoke at an event in the Atlanta area and described the incredible teamwork and heroism that saved *Marby* from a watery grave. He also reconnected with his former ROTC colleagues in the area.

By late 1942, Ed had transferred from *Marby* to become the disbursing officer at the U.S. Marine Corps Air Station at Quantico, VA. Amelia was working in the office of Congressman Paul Brown of Georgia's 10th Congressional District. The couple announced their intention to marry on 8 Nov 1942 in the Atlanta Constitution Newspaper.



Ed Rood, with ROTC Executive Officer Lt. Cmdr. J.M. Sweeney in Jun 1942, locating the spot off Java where *Marby* was bombed. Ed was *Marby's* Disbursing Officer during the attack.

Photo: Newspapers.com and The Atlanta Constitution

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Amelia Golucke in 1942 wedding announcement

Photo: Atlanta Constitution via Newspapers.com

Lacking his full military record, it is unclear whether Ed remained aboard the *Marby* when on 15 Oct 42, her overhaul complete, she sailed out of New York to rejoin the war effort, this time in the Atlantic. Operating mainly out of Recife, Brazil, following her overhaul, she hunted U-boats and blockade runners, and occasionally rescued downed Allied flyers and survivors of sunken enemy vessels. She frequented such ports as Georgetown, Ascension Island; Montevideo, Uruguay; St. Croix, St. Thomas, Trinidad, Cuba, Puerto Rico and other Caribbean nations.

On 1 Mar 43, Ed was promoted to full Lieutenant and on 3 Oct 45 to Lt. Commander. Again, it remains unclear the ships or shore stations to which he was attached on the dates of these promotions.

After the war, Ed became an accountant and eventually started his own company, J. E. Rood and Co., a real estate brokerage firm. He had been a member of Sigma Chi Fraternity at the University of Georgia and remained involved with that organization during his professional career.

Ed died on 7 Jul 1975 in Atlanta, Fulton County, GA. He is buried in Crawfordville Cemetery, Crawfordville, Taliaferro County, GA. After Ed died, Amelia married Robert 'Bobby' Faust Brooks Jr. She died on 30 Oct 2006 in Conyers, Rockdale, GA and is also buried in Crawfordville, where she was born.

Arthur Edward Rood appears on page 233.
of the book [Where Away – A Modern Odyssey](#).

Biography by Steve Wade, son of Frank V. Wade, BM2c, USS Marblehead 1939-1945, with connections and contributions from Heather L. Gray, and from a multitude of Ancestry.com, Wikipedia.com, Newspapers.com, FindAGrave.com and other Internet records.

Corrections, additions, and photos are welcomed by email to spwade@gmail.com.

Marby After Her Overhaul

On 15 Oct 42, *Marby* left New York to join the war effort in the mid-Atlantic. Operating from Recife, Brazil, she hunted U-boats and blockade runners and rescued Allied flyers and survivors off enemy ships. She also visited Ascension Island, Uruguay, St. Croix, St. Thomas, Trinidad, Cuba, and Puerto Rico.

On May 43, a B-26 bomber left Florida leading three planes to Morocco, via Puerto Rico, Guyana, Brazil, Ascension, and Liberia. The trip went fine until they landed at Natal, Brazil. Aware of Nazi loyalists in the city, the crews worried about security at the airstrip. They left for Ascension Island the next day, but none made it.

The B-26 was the last to ditch. Her crew of four survived the mid-ocean impact but were soon on a raft with no food and little water, adrift a thousand miles from Brazil and eight hundred from Ascension. Five days later, a plane saw them, and *Marby* sailed to their rescue. Four-out-of-four planes ditching after uneventful earlier legs seemed improbable to the B-26 co-pilot (and later a lawyer). He suspected sabotage. Also improbable was their mid-Atlantic rescue. They spent three days in *Marby's* sick bay and several weeks on Brazilian beaches.

Others were not so lucky. In Nov 43, U-boat 848 had two kills to her name when U.S. planes sank her off Ascension. Twenty survivors were spotted in three life rafts after the sinking, but none were seen again until 28 days later, on 3 Dec 43, when *Marby* found Chief Boatswain's Mate Hans Schade in a raft that had been dropped by a U.S. plane after the sinking. He died of exposure on 5 Dec in U.S. Navy Hospital (Recife). Buried with full military honors, he left behind a wife and kids in Bordeaux, France, the sub's home port.

By 20 Feb 44, *Marby* was in Bayonne, NJ. A week later, she escorted a convoy to Belfast, Ireland. On 25 Mar she was in Brooklyn having her torpedo tubes removed. On 8 May, she anchored off Coney Island for night firing training. After more Atlantic convoy crossings, on 24 Jul 44 she transited Gibraltar for Oran, Algeria, and duty with the 8th Fleet. On 29 Jul 44, she anchored off Palermo, Sicily ready for action.

At 10 p.m. on 14 Aug 44, U.S./Canadian forces boarded assault rafts 8,000 yards off the 50-foot cliffs of Port-Cros and Levant, two German-held islands near Le Lavandou, France. Enemy batteries atop those cliffs were neutralized just after midnight, and *Marby* and other ships positioned for Operation Dragoon.

As 15 Aug dawned on Le Lavandou's beaches, the ships poured fire onto enemy positions near Saint Raphael and pounded them for three days. Allied troops then hit the beaches causing an enemy retreat and the capture of 100,000 Germans, a third of their troops in southern France. Fourteen American Divisions entered the fight for Europe via this breach along with 17,000 tons of supplies offloaded daily on the docks of liberated Marseille and Toulon.

Marby hosted Midshipmen from the US Naval Academy Class of 1948 on their Youngster (sophomore) cruise to Caribbean ports in the summer of 1945. She then returned to the place of her birth, Philadelphia, for decommissioning in late-1945. The *Marby*, whose crew had earned her two Battle Stars and inspired America with their heroism in the early days of WWII, was scrapped on 27 Feb 46 in Philadelphia, PA, where her keel had been laid in 1920.