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What is it? They're US Navy Clothes Stops!

(Pennsylvania Military Museum, J. Gleim, Museum Curator)



These small lengths of white cotton cord with brass ends are US Navy issue clothes stops. The clothes stops were the Navy's version of clothes pins. They were issued to all new recruits as part of their standard gear until 1973. The stops were used to tie freshly washed laundry to a clothesline or other convenient place to dry. The cords could also be used to secure large folded objects such as a peacoat or mattress cover, giving a sailor more room inside his locker or sea bag.

This pile of clothes stops belonged to Devereaux Nathaniel Saller. A Philadelphia native, Saller (b. 1920- d. 2006) attended Upper Darby High School and Bliss Electrical School (now part of Montgomery Community College) where he studied to be an electrician. He served in the U.S. Navy Seabees from 6/29/1942 to 12/26/1945 and attained the rank of Chief Electrician's Mate. Seabees were deployed all over the world, especially for the quick construction of military bases, and Saller was no exception—he served in the Asiatic-Pacific Theater, including the liberation of the Philippines. After the war, Saller was one of 11,400 people to join the Civil Engineering Corps, of which approximately 8,000 were Seabees.