

CAPTAIN ERNEST LEE ACKISS, CHAPLAIN CORPS, U. S. NAVY

NAVAL HISTORY DIVISION

Captain Ackiss was born in Oceana, Virginia, September 16, 1887. son of William Harrison Ackiss and Mary Ann Seneca Ackiss (both deceased). He attended Richmond College, Richmond, Virginia, where he was President of the Mu Sigma Rho Literary Society, Editor in Chief of the "Messenger" and President of the Senior Class in 1910, the year he was graduated with a Bachelor of Arts degree. Entering Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Lanesville, Kentucky, he received a Master of Theology degree in 1913, and from the University of Chicago, Chicago, Illinois, he received the Master of Arts degree in 1916.

After two years as Associate Professor of English Bible at Richmond College, Captain Ackiss entered the Chaplain Corps of the U. S. Naval Reserve Force. He was later transferred to the U. S. Navy and attained the rank of Captain to date from July 1, 1941.

Reporting for active duty on February 17, 1918, Captain Ackiss was assigned duty at the U. S. Naval Shipyard, Boston, Massachusetts, where he remained for several months. In April of the same year he reported to the USS POCAHONTAS, for duty in the Atlantic. On May 30 the POCAHONTAS had a brief engagement with a German Submarine. After the cessation of hostilities, he had successive duty in the USS NEW HAMPSHIRE, operating with Battleships, Atlantic Fleet; the USS EAGLE #33; and the USS CHEWINK, Training Ship at New London, Connecticut.

Early in 1923 Captain Ackiss reported for postgraduate instruction at Union Theological Seminary and Columbia University, New York City. Later that year he proceeded to the Virgin Islands, where he had duty on the staff of the Governor as Aide for Public Welfare. He was named Federal Prohibition Director, for the Islands, and before leaving that post in 1925 became Director of Agriculture, Commerce and Labor on the staff of the Governor.

A tour of duty in the Bureau of Navigation, Navy Department, Washington, D. C. followed until November 1927. During that assignment he was copy editor of Navy Training Courses and of Boat Book, Landing Force Manual, and other publications. Again ordered to duty afloat, he served aboard the USS SARATOGA under the late Admiral Marc A. Mitscher, USN, from December 1927 until 1930. (He was later designated to officiate at the funeral services for Admiral Mitscher at Arlington National Cemetery, Arlington, Virginia, on February 5, 1947

Detached from the SARATOGA in July 1930, he reported to the Naval Training Station, San Diego, California, where he served for the next four years as District Chaplain, Eleventh Naval District. He had duty for a year aboard the USS NEVADA and in June 1936 was ordered to the Fourteenth Naval District for duty as District Chaplain until late 19

Captain Ackiss had duty as Force Chaplain on the staff of Commander Scouting Force, operating in the Pacific, aboard the USS PENNSYLVANIA, and later the USS INDIANAPOLIS, until August 1941. The next two years he served at the Naval Training Station, San Diego, California. In May 1943 he was assigned to the Twelfth Naval District, San Francisco, California, as District Chaplain, until November of 1944. He reported the following month to the Bureau of Naval Personnel, Chaplain Division, Navy Department, Washington, D. C.

From January to May 1945, Captain Ackiss served as Acting Director, Chaplains' Division of the Bureau of Naval Personnel, and from May as Assistant Director. For outstanding service during the period December 11, 1944 to August 31, 1945, he received a Letter of Commendation from the Secretary of the Navy and is entitled to wear the Commendation Ribbon. On January 24, 1946 he was appointed a member of the Navy Board Formulating Post-War Policy in Promotion and Retirement of Officers.

Captain Ackiss was ordered in August 1947, when detached from the Bureau of Naval Personnel, to the Potomac River Naval Command, Washington, D. C., for duty in connection with Naval Reserve Training Projects. He is now on duty in that assignment.

In addition to the Commendation Ribbon, Captain Ackiss is entitled to the American Defense Service Medal, the American Area Campaign Medal, and the World War II Victory Medal. He also has the Victory Medal for service in the U. S. Naval Reserve Force during World War I.

Captain Ackiss is married to the former Miss Susan Rich Davison of Athens, Georgia. There are two daughters, Mrs. Mary Dorsey Goolsby and Susan Lee Ackiss, and a son, Ernest Lee Ackiss, Jr. The family residence is 4007 Connecticut Avenue, Northwest, Washington, D. C.

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