

Deceased 1 April 1973

NAVAL HISTORY DIVISION

COMMODORE JASPER TERRY ACUFF, U. S. NAVY, RETIRED

Jasper Terry Acuff was born in Fayetteville, Tennessee, on March 29, 1898, son of James D. and Rose Terry Acuff. He attended Waker County High School, Webb School and Marion Military Institute, all located in Alabama, and the University of Alabama, at Tuscaloosa, Alabama, before his appointment to the U. S. Naval Academy, Annapolis, Maryland, which he entered from Alabama on July 20, 1917. While a Midshipman he had World War I service in the summer of 1918 in the USS MAINE, operating with the Atlantic Fleet. He was graduated and commissioned Ensign on June 2, 1921, and subsequently progressed in rank to that of Captain, to date from June 21, 1942. He served in the temporary rank of Commodore from June 30, 1945, until February 1946, and was advanced to that rank, the highest in which he had served on active duty, at his retirement on June 30, 1952.

After graduation from the Naval Academy in June 1921, he served in the USS IDAHO until February 1924, then completed instruction at the Submarine Base, New London, Connecticut, while attached to the USS CHEWINK. He was detached in December 1924 for duty until November 1927 in the USS S-32, operating on Asiatic Station as a unit of Submarine Division 16 of the Asiatic Fleet. Upon his return to the United States, he was assigned duty as an instructor in the Department of English at the Naval Academy, where he remained from February 1928 until May 1930.

During the next three years he had successive service in the submarines R-18, S-20 and S-28, then was a student at the Naval War College, Newport, Rhode Island, from August 1933 to May 1934. He had a year's duty as Inspector-Instructor, Tenth Fleet Division, at Fall River, Massachusetts, Seventh Fleet Division at New Bedford, Massachusetts, and the Eighth Fleet Division, Providence, Rhode Island, followed by sea duty on board the USS TEXAS. He served first as Assistant First Lieutenant and Damage Control Officer of that battleship from June 1936 to August 1937, and as First Lieutenant and Damage Control Officer for nine months thereafter.

He again returned to the Naval Academy, where he served for two years as Executive Officer of the USS REINA MERCEDES, station training ship, and in June 1940 joined the USS TENNESSEE as Navigator. He was serving in that capacity at the outbreak of World War II in December 1941 and continued until September 1942. The TENNESSEE, moored at Pearl Harbor when the Japanese launched their surprise attack on December 7, 1941, sustained two bomb hits, but damage and casualties were relatively light and she subsequently operated in the Pacific. After his detachment, he served for ten months as Executive Officer of the auxiliary transport ROCHAMBEAU, and from August 1943 until May 1944 commanded the auxiliary oiler KASKASKIA.

On May 29, 1944, he reported for duty on the Staff of Commander Service Squadron 8, Pacific Fleet, and in August of that year was assigned additional duty as Commander Task Group 30.8 of the THIRD Fleet. "For distinguishing himself, in the line of his profession, by exceptionally meritorious service ...as Commander Task Group 30.8, THIRD Fleet, during the period 20 August to 26 January 1945,..." he was awarded the Distinguished Service Medal. The citation continues.

"...While the THIRD Fleet was executing a series of highly successful offensive missions against the enemy - in the Western Pacific, the Philippines and South China Seas - in support of Central and Southwest Pacific amphibious operations, Captain Acuff successfully delivered the vital oil, gasoline and replacements to THIRD Fleet units throughout the entire period of operations without a single failure as to time, location or quantity required. This magnificent performance of duty was a major factor in the overall success of the THIRD Fleet operations. His skill and determined spirit in the face of adversity set new standards for Fleet replenishment. In order to accomplish his mission, he conducted servicing of fleet units in enemy waters on frequent occasions and was under air and submarine attack on several occasions. His conduct throughout was in keeping with the highest traditions of the United States Naval Service."

On June 25, 1945, he was ordered detached from duty on the Staff of Commander Service Squadron 8, and to duty as Commander Service Division 102, of Service Squadron 10, Pacific Fleet, with the accompanying rank (temporary) of Commodore. He remained in that command until January 23, 1946, when he was ordered to the Office of the Chief of Naval Operations, Navy Department, and upon reporting in February, that year, he reverted to his permanent rank of Captain. Under orders of February 19, 1946, he reported shortly thereafter to Headquarters, Eleventh Naval District, San Diego, California, for duty on the Staff of the Commandant, as District Operations Officer.

He was transferred to the Retired List of the U. S. Navy on June 30, 1952, in the rank of Commodore, the highest rank in which he had served on active duty.

In addition to the Distinguished Service Medal, Commodore Acuff has the World War I Victory Medal, Atlantic Fleet Clasp; the American Defense Service Medal, Fleet Clasp; the Asiatic-Pacific Campaign Medal with operation stars; the World War II Victory Medal; the Navy Occupation Service Medal; and the Philippine Liberation Ribbon with star.

