

NAVAL HISTORY DIVISION

CAPTAIN RALPH G. COBURN, U. S. NAVAL RESERVE

Ralph G. Coburn was born on October 11, 1909, in Chicago, Illinois, son of Mrs. Ralph G. (Katherine Rawn) Coburn and the late Mr. Coburn. He attended Harvard College from 1929 to 1933, graduating with the degree of Bachelor of Arts in Anthropology, and received the degree of Bachelor of Laws from Harvard Law School in 1936. He is a member of the Bar of Massachusetts and that of New York, and is Vice President of Hubbard, Vestorvelt and Muttolay, Inc. (Real Estate and Corporation Finance), and Manager of the Corporate Equities Department, engaged in the negotiation of the purchase and sale or merger of business or interests and the related financing of such transactions.

Commissioned Ensign in the U. S. Naval Reserve on June 22, 1933, he was assigned to the Fifth Division, First Battalion, U. S. Naval Reserve (while in inactive status) during the next eight years. He was promoted to Lieutenant (junior grade) on April 11, 1940; to Lieutenant, June 15, 1942; Lieutenant Commander, July 1, 1943; Commander, July 20, 1945; and Captain, June 1, 1956. His selection for the rank of Rear Admiral, USNR, was approved by the President on November 1, 1960, his date of rank to be determined later.

Called to active duty in November 1940, he served until September 1941 as Gunnery Officer of the USS SIREN (PY-13), then became Officer of the U. S. Navy Net Tender HOLLY (YNL4). He was serving in the latter capacity at the outbreak of World War II in December 1941, and three months later was detached for instruction at the Sub-Chaser Training Center, Miami, Florida. Completing the course in May 1942, he served for the next five months as Commanding Officer of the USS PC-551.

In October 1942 he returned to the Sub-Chaser Training Center, Miami, where he was in charge of the Administrative Department until May 1943. In July of that year he assumed command of the USS EMERY (DE-28). Under his command, that destroyer escort vessel participated in the Gilbert Islands operation; the occupation of Kwajalein and Majuro Atolls, in the Marshall Islands operation; and in the capture and occupation of the southern Palau Islands. He received two Letters of Commendation, with authorization to wear the Commendation Ribbon and Star, from the Commander in Chief, Pacific Fleet, the first "For meritorious conduct in the performance of his duties as Commanding Officer of a U. S. Destroyer Escort EMERY during operations in the Pacific from September 1943 to November 1944..."; the second, "For exceptionally meritorious service as Commanding Officer of a combatant vessel during operations in the Pacific..."

From January through June 1945 he was a student at the Naval War College, Newport, Rhode Island, and during the last three months of hostilities served on the Staff of the Commander in Chief, Pacific Fleet as Assistant Operations Officer. After his return to the United States and a period of terminal leave, he was released from active duty. While in inactive status he has participated in annual training programs, and since February 1959 has been Commander, Naval Reserve DE Division, Third Naval District, Headquarters in New York, N. Y.

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In addition to the Commendation Ribbon with Star, Captain Coburn has the American Defense Service Medal; American Campaign Medal; Asiatic-Pacific Campaign Medal with three operation stars; and World War II Victory Medal.

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