

VICE ADMIRAL ROBERT FRED BATCHELDER
SUPPLY CORPS, UNITED STATES NAVY, RETIRED

Vice Admiral Batchelder was born in Worcester, Massachusetts, on March 27, 1895, son of the late Mr. and Mrs. George W. Batchelder. He attended the South High School and Worcester Polytechnic Institute in that city prior to October 1917 when he was appointed an Ensign in the Supply Corps of the U. S. Naval Reserve. In August 1921 he was commissioned in the same grade in the U. S. Navy to rank from June 4, 1920, and subsequently progressed in grade until his promotion to the rank of Commodore on November 2, 1945. He reverted to his permanent rank of Captain on December 1, 1947. His selection for promotion to the rank of Rear Admiral was approved by the President on December 12, 1950, and he assumed that grade on January 26, 1951 with date of rank as July 1, 1949. On April 1, 1957, he was transferred to the Retired List of the U. S. Navy and was advanced to the rank of Vice Admiral on the basis of a combat award.

Ordered to active duty in December 1917 as a Reserve Officer, Vice Admiral Batchelder was under instruction at the Naval Pay Officers' School, Washington, D. C. until the following January when he reported for duty in connection with fitting out the USS ELINOR. Detached before that vessel was commissioned, he had duty in the Bureau of Supplies and Accounts, Navy Department, Washington, D. C., from February to November 1918, when he joined the USS ANTIGONE, in which he served until relieved from active duty in October 1919.

Returning to active duty in October 1921 as an officer of the regular Navy, Vice Admiral Batchelder was under instruction at the Supply Corps School of Application, Navy Department, Washington, D. C., and the Navy Yard, Boston, until May 1922, when he joined the USS CHAUMONT. He served as Assistant for Disbursing and Assistant Supply Officer of that transport from May 1922 until July 1924. After completing a two-year post graduate course in business administration at the Graduate School of Business Administration, Harvard University, he had duty at the Navy Yard, Boston, from July 1926 to September 1927. Assigned duty at the Bethlehem Shipbuilding Corporation, Quincy, Massachusetts, in connection with fitting out the USS LEXINGTON, he served as Assistant for Disbursing and Senior Assistant to the Supply Officer of that famous aircraft carrier from the date of her commissioning, December 14, 1927 until January 1930.

Vice Admiral Batchelder again had duty in the Bureau of Supplies and Accounts, Navy Department, Washington, D. C., from March 1930 to September 1933. Returning to sea duty, he served as Supply Officer of the USS NITRO from October 1933 until June 1936. From August of that year until June 1939, he had duty on the Staff of the Naval Finance and Supply School, Navy Yard, Philadelphia. In July 1939 he joined the USS CALIFORNIA and served as Supply Officer of that battleship until December 1940

when he returned to duty at the Naval Finance and Supply School, Philadelphia. He served as Executive Officer until March 1941 when he became the Officer in Charge. In August of the same year, that school was moved to Boston and consolidated with the newly established Navy Supply Corps School located at the Graduate School of Business Administration, Harvard University. Vice Admiral Batchelder assisted in the establishment of the new school and became its first executive officer. In January 1942 he was transferred to duty as Senior Assistant to the Supply Officer, Philadelphia Naval Shipyard.

In February 1943, Vice Admiral Batchelder reported for duty as Force Supply Officer on the Staff of the Commander, Amphibious Force, U. S. Atlantic Fleet and participated in the Sicilian Occupation. From November of that year until late July 1944, he served in Europe as Force Supply Officer on the Staff of Vice Admiral (now Admiral, Retired) A. G. Kirk, Commander, U. S. Task Force 122 and the Western Allied Naval Task Force. For his services in that assignment during the amphibious assault landings on the coast of Normandy, France, in June 1944, he was awarded the Legion of Merit with Combat "V," with the following citation: "For exceptionally meritorious conduct in the performance of outstanding service to the Government of the United States, Captain Batchelder, Force Supply Officer, Western Naval Task Force, planned for and provided for the necessary supplies during the planning and operational phases of the amphibious assault landing on the coast of Normandy, France, commencing on 6 June 1944. His professional skill and tireless devotion to duty contributed immeasurably to the success of the Normandy Campaign and were in keeping with the highest traditions of the United States Naval Service."

For his service in this same assignment, he also was awarded the Croix de Guerre with Palm by the Government of France "for exceptional war services rendered in the course of the operations of the liberation of France."

Returning to the United States in August 1944, Vice Admiral Batchelder was assigned duty as Senior Assistant to the Director, Navy Material Redistribution and Disposal Administration, New York. In April 1945, he became Director of that Administration. For his services with the Navy Material Redistribution and Disposal Administration, he was awarded a Gold Star in lieu of a second Legion of Merit. In November 1945, he became Chief of the Property Disposition Branch, Office of Naval Material, and continued in that assignment until June 1946, when he was detailed to duty with the War Assets Administration, Washington, D. C., as Deputy Administrator.

In February 1947, Vice Admiral Batchelder was relieved from his detail with the War Assets Administration and returned to duty in the Navy, being attached to the Bureau of Supplies and Accounts, Navy Department. In March 1947, he was designated Assistant Chief of Bureau (Administrative and Planning). From February 1948 to December 1951 he served as Commanding Officer, Naval Supply Depot, San Diego, California, with additional duty as District Supply Officer on the Staff of the Commandant, Eleventh Naval District, following which he was Commanding Officer, Naval Supply Activities, New York (Brooklyn) from January 1952 to December 1954.

On 1 January 1955 he assumed duty as Inspector General, Supply Corps, U. S. Navy, Bureau of Supplies and Accounts, Department of the Navy, Washington, D. C., and served in that capacity until relieved of all active duty pending his retirement, effective April 1, 1957.

In addition to the Legion of Merit (Combat) with Gold Star and the Croix de Guerre with Palm, Vice Admiral Batchelder has the Victory Medal and is entitled to the American Defense Service Medal, Fleet Clasp (USS CALIFORNIA); the American Campaign Medal; the European-African-Middle Eastern Campaign Medal with two stars; the World War II Victory Medal; and the National Defense Service Medal.

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