

# NAVAL HISTORY DIVISION

REAR ADMIRAL ROBERT L. BAUGHAN, JR., UNITED STATES NAVY

Robert Louis Baughan, Jr., was born in Huntington, West Virginia, on September 6, 1919, son of Robert L. and Elsie Martin Baughan. He attended Huntington High School and Randle's Preparatory School before entering the U. S. Naval Academy, Annapolis, Maryland, on appointment from his native state on June 17, 1937. He was graduated with the Class of 1941 on February 7, that year (course accelerated due to National Emergency), at which time he received the degree of Bachelor of Science and was commissioned Ensign in the United States Navy. Through subsequent advancement, he attained the rank of Rear Admiral, to date from March 1, 1969.

After graduation from the Naval Academy in February 1941, he was ordered to the USS LEXINGTON (CV-2), and served as a junior officer in Gunnery and as Ship's Secretary during the early period of World War II until May 1942, when that carrier was sunk as a result of a Japanese air attack during the Battle of the Coral Sea. A survivor, he reported to the Destroyer Base, San Diego, California, and after brief duty there was assigned to the USS CHAMPLIN (DD-601) in which he served from September 1942 until March 1945, first as Gunnery Officer and later Executive Officer. In that destroyer he participated in the Sicilian occupation, bombardments of Formia-Anzio area of Italy, and the invasion of Southern France, as well as escort and convoy operations, during which the CHAMPLIN sank a German submarine off New York in February 1944. He was awarded the Bronze Star Medal and Gold Stars in lieu of the Second and Third similar awards, each with Combat "V." Citations follow:

Bronze Star Medal: "...When his commanding officer was seriously wounded during a vigorous engagement with a surfaced enemy submarine (on April 7, 1944), Lieutenant Baughan promptly assumed command and, expertly continuing the direction of his ship's damaging fire, pressed home effective attacks which destroyed the hostile craft and forced the crew to abandon her..."

Gold Star in lieu of Second Bronze Star Medal: "...During the invasion of Southern France in August 1944...Lieutenant Baughan expertly navigated his ship to a designated point off the invasion coast from which the entire operation was positioned, and subsequently piloted the CHAMPLIN through dangerous and restricted waters close to known enemy minefields and within easy range of hostile shore artillery to conduct numerous gunfire support missions..."

Gold Star in lieu of Third Bronze Star Medal: "...When his ship escorted a convoy of merchant ships from the United States to Mediterranean ports, Lieutenant Baughan aided in vigorous attacks against an enemy submarine after dusk on March 12 and, firing his guns and releasing depth charges throughout the night, assisted in the sinking of the submarine, which was unable to inflict any damage on friendly ships..."

He was also awarded the Order of Fatherland War, Second Class, by the Russian Government (Press Release of December 7, 1945: Russian Decorations) for his part in the submarine sinkings.

In April 1945 he reported as Gunnery Training Officer of the USS WYOMING (AG-17), and also served as Assistant Gunnery Officer during the period ending in June 1946. In July he returned to Annapolis as a Student in Ordnance Engineering at the Naval Postgraduate School, and continuing the course at Massachusetts Institute of Technology, at Cambridge, received the degree of Master of Science in June 1949. From July of that year until March 1951 he served as Executive Officer of the USS SHELTON (DD-790), screen flagship of Task Force 77, operating in Korean waters. He was awarded the Navy Commendation Medal, "for meritorious service as Executive Officer and Navigator of the USS SHELTON during operations against the enemy in the Korean Theater from June 25, 1950 to January 19, 1951..."

He commanded the USS PORTERFIELD (DD-682), from her recommissioning in April 1951 to June 1952. The PORTERFIELD, under his command, was assigned to the Korean area of hostilities to support United Nations policies and as a unit of Task Force SEVENTY-SEVEN performed screening duties. She later joined Task Group NINETY-FIVE Point ELEVEN in the Yellow Sea off the Korean West Coast, where she acted as a screening unit and plane guard as well as participating in numerous close support patrols. He was awarded a Gold Star in lieu of the Fourth Bronze Star Medal "for meritorious service...during operations against enemy aggressor forces in Korea from August 1951 to January 1952...(during which he) was greatly instrumental in the success achieved by the PORTERFIELD in inflicting extensive damage upon the enemy..."

During the period July 1952 until September 1954 he served as Ordnance Maintenance Officer on the Staff of Commander Cruiser-Destroyer Force, Pacific, after which he had a tour of duty in the Bureau of Ordnance, Navy Department, Washington, D. C. There he served until June 1955 as Head, Surface and Anti-aircraft Section, Fire Control Branch, Material Division, and for two years thereafter as Head of the Fire Control Branch. In September 1957 he became Executive Officer of the USS SALEM (CA-139), Flagship of Commander SIXTH Fleet, operating in the Mediterranean, and served in that capacity until November 1958.

In January 1959 he returned to the Navy Department, Washington, D. C., to serve in the Office of the Chief of Naval Operations in connection with the development of Operations Control Centers for unified and naval fleet commanders. He was Prospective Commanding Officer of the USS LEAHY (DLG-16), building at Bath Iron Works, Bath, Maine, from April 1962 until her commissioning, August 4, that year, when he assumed command of that guided missile frigate. During the period July 1964 to August 1965 he was Commander Destroyer Squadron SIX, after which he had instruction at the Industrial College of the Armed Forces,

Washington, D. C. In July 1966 he was assigned to the Joint Staff, Organization of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Washington, D. C., where he served as Staff Officer in the Pacific Division, Operations Directorate until June 1968. Upon being appointed Rear Admiral, he became Deputy Director for Operations in the National Military Command Center. "For exceptionally meritorious service from July 1966 through July 1969 in the Pacific Division and as a Deputy Director for Operations in the National Military Command Center, Operations Directorate, Organization of the Joint Chiefs of Staff..." he was awarded the Legion of Merit.

In August 1969 he reported as Commander Cruiser-Destroyer Flotilla NINE and was awarded a Gold Star in lieu of the Second Legion of Merit. He was cited in part as follows: "...Through his exceptional professional expertise and personal acumen, he was instrumental in the development and execution of new and improved concepts for the conduct of fleet readiness and operational evaluations, with an attendant significant improvement in a wide spectrum of naval warfare procedures..."

In August 1970 he became Vice Commander of the Naval Ordnance Systems Command, Navy Department. He was awarded a Gold Star in lieu of The Third Legion of Merit for "...his outstanding leadership and judgment, and inspiring devotion to duty...(which) contributed materially to the mission accomplishment of the Naval Ordnance Systems Command..." Assigned to the Headquarters Naval Material Command, Navy Department, he served as Project Manager LHA/DD-963 Class Project (PM 18) from December 1971 to October 1972, then as Project Manager of the Major Surface Combatant Ships Project with additional duty from June 1973 as Director of the Tactical Digital Systems Office.

In addition to the Legion of Merit with Two Gold Stars, the Bronze Star Medal with three Gold Stars and Combat "V", and the Navy Commendation Medal, Rear Admiral Baughan has the American Defense Service Medal with star; Asiatic-Pacific Campaign Medal with two stars; American Campaign Medal with star; European-African-Middle Eastern Campaign Medal with four stars; World War II Victory Medal; Navy Occupation Service Medal, Asia Clasp; China Service Medal (extended); National Defense Service Medal with bronze star; Korean Service Medal with three stars; United Nations Service Medal; and the Korean Presidential Unit Citation Badge.

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