

NAVAL HISTORY DIVISION

LIEUTENANT (JUNIOR GRADE) JOHN STORRS FOOTE
UNITED STATES NAVAL RESERVE, DECEASED

John Storrs Foote, the son of Frank Foote and Mrs. Electra Storrs Foote, was born on October 26, 1921, in McGraws, West Virginia. On June 29, 1942, he enlisted in the U.S. Naval Reserve and on June 8, 1943 his enlistment was terminated to accept an appointment in the U.S. Naval Reserve. The following day he accepted the appointment of Ensign and on August 1, 1944 was advanced to the rank of Lieutenant (junior grade).

After completing aviation training he was designated Naval Aviator on June 9, 1943, and had further instruction at the Naval Air Station, Daytona Beach, Florida. He remained there for a month, before he reported for duty under instruction at the Carrier Qualification Training Unit, Glenview, Illinois. In September 1943 he joined Bombing Squadron 15, aboard the USS ESSEX and was so serving on November 11, 1944 when he was killed as a result of enemy action in the Asiatic Area.

For services in this assignment he was awarded the Air Medal and the Gold Star in lieu of the Second Air Medal, and the Navy Cross. The citations follow:

Air Medal: "For meritorious achievement in aerial flight as Pilot of a Carrier-Based Dive Bomber during action against enemy Japanese positions and shipping in the Pacific War Area from May 19 to September 24, 1944. Courageous and daring in combat, Lieutenant, Junior Grade, Foote participated in numerous strikes against the enemy on Marcus and Wake, in the Marianas, Bonins, Palau and Philippine Islands during this period, pressing home his attacks aggressively and contributing materially to the success of these hazardous missions."

Gold Star in lieu of the Second Air Medal: "For meritorious achievement in aerial flight as Pilot of a Carrier-Based Dive Bomber in action against enemy Japanese forces in the Pacific Area on September 21, 1944. Participating in a vigorous attack on an enemy convoy west of the Philippine Islands, Lieutenant, Junior Grade, Foote skillfully maneuvered his plane for advantageous striking position and released his bombs with accuracy and splendid timing, severely damaging a large cargo vessel and rendering it defenseless and vulnerable to a hit by another plane which completed the destruction of the important hostile ship. Lieutenant, Junior Grade, Foote's expert airmanship and inspiring devotion to duty were in keeping with the highest traditions of the United States Naval Service."

Navy Cross: "For extraordinary heroism as Pilot of a Dive Bomber in Air Group FIFTEEN, attached to the USS ESSEX, in action against major units of the enemy Japanese Fleet during the Battle off Cape Engano in the Philippines, October 25, 1944. Launched at dawn from his parent carrier when the northern prong of the Japanese Fleet swung from a south-easterly to a northerly course in an effort to escape the powerful units of our Third Fleet, Lieutenant, Junior Grade, Foote took off under extremely adverse weather conditions in pursuit of the fleeing enemy task force. With a Japanese aircraft carrier of the Shokaku class as his target, he skillfully maneuvered through the deadly rain of bursting antiaircraft fire in company with other planes of his group, plunged on the enemy disposition with determined aggressiveness and struck furiously, scoring a direct hit on the hostile carrier. A brilliant combat pilot, Lieutenant, Junior Grade, Foote defied the persistent antiaircraft fire of the entire Japanese task force to execute his bold attack and, by his daring initiative, determined tactics and superb airmanship in the face of terrific odds, contributed essentially to the sinking of a vital Japanese warship. His great personal valor throughout the bitterly fought engagement upheld the highest traditions of the United States Naval Service."

He also received the Purple Heart Medal.

In addition to the Navy Cross; the Air Medal with Gold Star, and the Purple Heart Medal, Lieutenant (junior grade) Foote had the Asiatic-Pacific Campaign Medal, the American Campaign Medal, and the World War II Victory Medal.

8 November 1950