

4/26/59

REAR ADMIRAL AUGUSTUS F. FECHTELER
U. S. NAVY, DECEASED

Augustus Francis Fechteler was born in Prussia, Europe, on September 1, 1857. He was appointed Cadet Midshipman to the U. S. Naval Academy by the Honorable T. J. Creamer, Member of Congress from the Seventh District of New York in June 1873 and completed the course on June 20, 1877. He served the two years at sea, then required by law, returned to the Academy for "final graduation" on June 20, 1879, and subsequently was commissioned Ensign to rank from November 23, 1880. His promotions were as follows: Lieutenant (jg), March 6, 1887; Lieutenant, November 10, 1892; Commander, July 1, 1905; Captain, July 1, 1909; and Rear Admiral, to rank from July 11, 1915.

His first service at sea was on European Station, and during the period June 1879 to November 1888, he served successively aboard the USS SHENANDOAH; with the Coast Survey (1882-1885); in the Receiving Ship VERMONT; Training Ships JAMESTOWN and PORTSMOUTH; and USS ESSEX. On January 10, 1889 he reported to the Bureau of Navigation, Navy Department, Washington, D. C., and a year later was transferred to the Office of Naval Intelligence where he remained until January 1892.

He was placed in charge of a draft of men sent to Mare Island, California, to serve as crew for the USS MOHICAN, and reported aboard that vessel on February 16, 1892. He completed that period of sea duty in October 1894, and for a year thereafter was in charge of the Bureau Hydrographic Office at San Francisco, California. From October 1895 to August 1896 he was in charge of Inspection of Ships, and on September 19 joined the USS MONTEREY. He completed inspection of the USS OREGON, first class battleship, in November 1896, and in December 1898 joined the USS CONCORD. He remained aboard that gunboat, on Asiatic Station, until August 1899 when he joined the USS SOLACE for transportation back to Mare Island, California. There he served as Aide to the Commandant until August 15, 1901.

Duty as Navigator of the USS IOWA, from August 16, 1901 until she was decommissioned on July 16, 1903, was followed by inspection duty, for the Bureaus of Ordnance and Engineering, at the Union Iron Works, San Francisco, until March 2, 1904. He then returned to the Office of Naval Intelligence, Navy Department, where he served during the year following. In May 1905 he went to New York to inspect the USS DUBUQUE, and commanded her from her commissioning until December 22, 1906.

While on duty as a Member of the Board of Inspection and Survey, Navy Department, he inspected the BROOKLYN and the MISSISSIPPI. He attended the Conference of Officers at the Naval War College, Newport, Rhode Island, resuming his inspection duties in September 1908. He was assigned duty as General Inspector of the USS SOUTH CAROLINA at the works of William Cramp and Sons, Philadelphia, in October 1909, and assumed command of that battleship at her commissioning on March 1, 1910. When detached in November 1911, he was

R. Adm. A. F. Fechteler, USN, Dec.

designated President of the Board of Inspection and Survey (for ships), and from December 18, that year, he had additional temporary duty in connection with battleship plans to the General Board, Navy Department.

He attended a course at the Naval War College from November 1914 until July 1915, when he was ordered to Provincetown, Massachusetts, to assume command of the SECOND Division, Atlantic Fleet, under the Commander in Chief, and on July 24, he was commissioned Rear Admiral, to date from July 11, 1915. His flag remained in the USS FLORIDA after he was transferred on May 15, 1916, to duty as Commander SEVENTH Division, but was transferred to the USS NEW YORK and later to the USS UTAH, when he was in command of the SIXTH Division, from June 19, 1916 during World War I, to February 2, 1918.

On February 5, 1918 he assumed the duties of Commandant, Navy Yard, Norfolk, Virginia, and remained in that assignment throughout the latter months of the war and until April 10, 1919. He was awarded the Navy Cross and cited as follows: "For exceptionally meritorious service in a duty of great responsibility as Division Commander, SIXTH Division of the Atlantic Fleet, and later as Commandant of the Navy Yard, Norfolk, Virginia."

Transferred to duty as Commandant of the Fifth Naval District, with Headquarters at Norfolk, Virginia, he reported on April 10, 1919. He died on May 26, 1921, at the Naval Operating Base, Hampton Roads, Virginia.

In addition to the Navy Cross, Rear Admiral Fechteler had the Spanish Campaign Medal; the Philippine Campaign Medal; and the World War I Victory Medal.

Rear Admiral Fechteler's wife was the late Mrs. Maud Morrow Fechteler. One son, Lieutenant Frank Casper Fechteler, was killed in an airplane crash at Selfridge Field, Mt. Clemens, Michigan, on September 21, 1922. Another son, Admiral William M. Fechteler, USN, served as Chief of Naval Operations from August 1951 to August 1953, and is now Commander in Chief, Allied Forces, Southern Europe.

The USS FECHTELER (DE 157), was named in honor of the late Rear Admiral Augustus F. Fechteler, USN, and his son, the late Lieutenant Frank Casper Fechteler, USN. That vessel was lost in May 1944, and a second vessel, DD 870, was so called to perpetuate the name of the first vessel. Miss Joan Stevens Fechteler, granddaughter of Rear Admiral Fechteler and niece of Lieutenant Fechteler sponsored both vessels at their respective launchings on April 22, 1943 and April 25, 1945.

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