

CAPTAIN CHARLES ADAIR, UNITED STATES NAVY

NAVAL HISTORY DIVISION

Captain Adair was born in Tyler, Texas, on November 3, 1902, the son of Mrs. Sadie Pennell Adair and the late Charles L. Adair. Prior to his entering the United States Naval Academy at Annapolis, Maryland, from the State of California on June 16, 1922, he attended San Bernardino High School, San Bernardino, California. While a Midshipman he was a member of the Varsity Track Team; participated in class swimming, wrestling, and crew; and was Battalion Adjutant his First Class year. Graduated and commissioned Ensign on June 3, 1926, he subsequently was promoted as follows: Lieutenant (jg), June 3, 1929; Lieutenant, June 30, 1936; Lieutenant Commander, July 1, 1940; Commander, August 15, 1942; and Captain, to rank from August 1, 1943.

Following graduation from the Naval Academy in June, 1926, Captain Adair was assigned to the USS MISSISSIPPI and served in the battleship, operating with Battleship Division 4, Battle Fleet, until 1929. He continued service at sea for the next four years, with consecutive duty aboard the destroyer TOUCEY, operating with Destroyer Division 25, Squadron 9, Scouting Fleet; in the USS BLAKE LEY, operating with Destroyer Division 1, Scouting Force; and following instruction at the Torpedo School, Newport, Rhode Island, in the USS PATOKA, tender for lighter-than-aircraft and Naval Transportation Service oiler.

In June, 1933, Captain Adair returned to the United States for instruction in General Line duties and Applied Communications at the Postgraduate School, Annapolis, Maryland. From 1935 to 1938 he served successively as radio officer on the staff of Commander, Destroyer Squadron 6, USS LITCHFIELD, flagship, and Commander, Destroyer Squadron 14, USS DALLAS, flagship, while these squadrons operated with Battle Force, U. S. Fleet. In June, 1938, he again returned to Annapolis, this time for duty in the Executive Department of the Naval Academy.

Detached from the Naval Academy in July, 1941, Captain Adair reported for duty as aide and flag lieutenant on the staff of Commander in Chief, U. S. Asiatic Fleet, and was serving in that assignment when the Japanese attacked the Philippines in December, 1941. He moved to Corregidor when Manila was declared an open city and later in December escaped from the Philippines aboard the USS LANIKAI, a schooner commissioned in the U. S. Navy on December 5, 1941. With a Philippine crew, three other United States Naval officers, one Dutch Naval Officer, and some enlisted personnel, totalling 25, they sailed at night, keeping the ship hidden close ashore in the daytime, to avoid Japanese aircraft and ships. They arrived in Soerabaja, Dutch East Indies, late in January, 1942.

Captain Adair was awarded the Army Distinguished Unit Badge for service in the Philippines and Corregidor.

Captain Adair remained in Java, at temporary headquarters established prior to the fall of Java, until February, 1942, when he again escaped in the USS LANIKAI, arriving in Fremantle, Australia, on March 17, 1942. Shortly afterwards, he made a scouting trip off the northwest coast of Australia in command of the LANIKAI and after her decommissioning in September, 1942, he reported for duty on the staff of Commander, U. S. Naval Forces, Western Australia, serving as communication officer until June, 1943. He had duty from June, 1943 until January, 1945, as planning and operations officer on the staff of Commander, Seventh Amphibious Force, participating in all landings in New Guinea, New Britain, the Admiralty Islands, and the Philippines during that period. For outstanding services during action on September 23, 1943, he was awarded the Silver Star Medal, and during the period July, 1943 to December, 1944, the Legion of Merit. The citations follow:

SILVER STAR MEDAL:

"For conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity as Force Navigator in action against enemy Japanese forces during amphibious operations at Finschhafen, Eastern New Guinea, on September 22, 1943. With the bridge of the flagship the principal target of persistent and concentrated hostile bombing attacks following the withdrawal of our assault ships from the beachhead area on D-Day, Captain (then Commander) Adair repeatedly defied the enemy's striking planes to direct all ship movements and, ordering radical maneuvers in a brilliantly planned evasive action, enabled the convoy to elude the savagely plunging aircraft and to destroy by accurate gunfire several hostile planes. By his expert seamanship, outstanding tactical skill and dauntless courage under fire, Captain Adair effectively protected the ships of his convoy against all damage from Japanese aircraft and contributed materially to the success of our operations in this area. His gallant conduct throughout upheld the highest traditions of the United States Naval Service."

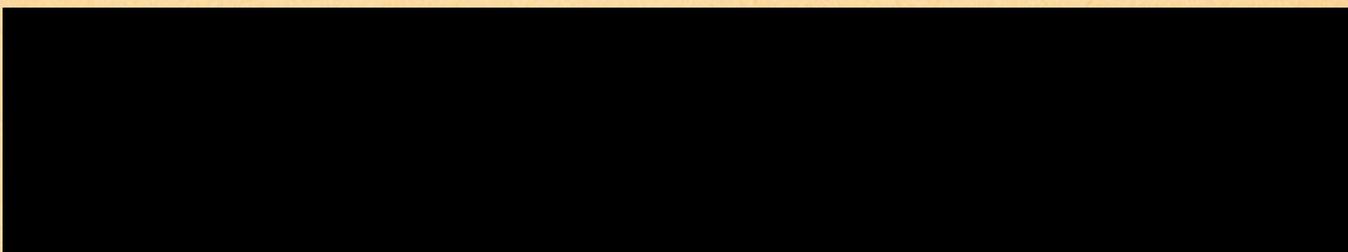
LEGION OF MERIT:

"For exceptionally meritorious conduct in the performance of outstanding services to the Government of the United States as a Member of the Staff of the Commander Seventh Amphibious Force, from July 1943,

to December 1944. An able exponent of amphibious warfare, Captain Adair took a major part in the planning and execution of every amphibious landing in the Southwest Pacific Area extending from the eastern tip of New Guinea to the Philippine Islands. By his sound judgment and tactical skill in the preparations of plans, his resourceful wisdom and tact in coordinating the operations of the Seventh Amphibious Force with other naval and army units, and his superb seamanship and tireless efforts in the execution of complex operations throughout a period of fierce hostilities, Captain Adair contributed essentially to the success of our amphibious landings and to our continued effective prosecution of the war in the Pacific theater."

Captain Adair returned to the United States in January, 1945, and served from that time until September, 1945, as Assistant Director, Naval Communications, Navy Department, Washington, D. C. Transferring in September to the Bureau of Naval Personnel, he is now serving as Officer in Charge of Distribution Control in the Officer Distribution Division.

In addition to the Silver Star Medal, the Legion of Merit, and the Army Distinguished Unit Badge, Captain Adair is entitled to the American Defense Service Medal, Fleet Clasp; the Asiatic-Pacific Area Campaign Medal; the American Area Campaign Medal; the Philippine Defense Ribbon; the Philippine Liberation Ribbon; and the World War II Victory Medal. He also has the Expert Rifle and Expert Pistol Medals.



June 27, 1947