

CAPTAIN JOHN C. ALDERMAN
UNITED STATES NAVY

NAVAL HISTORY DIVISION

John Clement Alderman was born in Portland, Oregon, on July 31, 1906, son of Lewis Raymond Alderman and the late Mrs. (Alice Barber) Alderman. He attended public schools of Portland, Eastern High School in Washington, D. C., and Marion Institute, Marion, Alabama, before entering the U. S. Naval Academy, Annapolis, Maryland, as a Midshipman from Oregon in 1924. Graduated and commissioned Ensign on June 7, 1928, he subsequently attained the rank of Captain, to date from March 25, 1945.

After graduation in June 1928, he remained at the Naval Academy for pre-flight instruction in aviation, and in September of that year joined the USS COLORADO. He had miscellaneous duties as a junior officer aboard that battleship until October 1930, when he was detached with orders to the Naval Air Station, Pensacola, Florida, as a student aviator. Designated Naval Aviator on September 3, 1931, he has been associated with Naval aviation since that time.

Duty from November 1931 to June 1934 as a pilot and Personnel Officer of Scouting Squadron 2-B, based on the USS SARATOGA, was followed by two years as a pilot and Navigation Officer of Patrol Squadron 3-F, attached to the Naval Air Station, Coco Solo, Canal Zone. From June to December 1936 he served with the aviation unit of the USS ASTORIA, and from January 1937 to June 1939 was Senior Aviator of the USS VINCENNES. One year as pilot and Operations Officer at the Naval Air Station, Anacostia, D. C., preceded command of the USS PELICAN during the period prior to and during the early months of World War II.

In July 1942 he assumed command of the USS McFARLAND, and shortly thereafter participated in the Guadalcanal Campaign. For "extraordinary heroism and outstanding devotion to duty as Commanding Officer of the USS McFARLAND while engaged in special missions in the Solomon Islands Area during the period August 8 to October 16, 1942" he was awarded the Navy Cross. The citation commends him for valuable service by assisting in the task of protecting vital supply lanes to Guadalcanal and states further: "...On one occasion when enemy fire had so severely damaged the McFARLAND that further combat duty seemed unlikely, his persistence and technical ability made possible the necessary repairs despite most adverse conditions and enabled her to continue in the service of her country..."

He is entitled to the Ribbon for, and a facsimile of the Presidential Unit Citation to the USS McFARLAND awarded for "outstanding performance during action against enemy Japanese forces in the Southwest Pacific Area, June 20 to October 16, 1942." The citation continues: "Serving in turn as a seaplane tender, escort vessel, patrol boat and cargo and troop carrier, the McFARLAND under threat of hostile attacks, delivered urgently needed supplies to American troops on Guadalcanal until eventually disabled by Japanese dive bombers and towed to port for repair. Her restoration to combatant status, at a time when she might easily have been given up for lost, is a distinctive tribute to the courageous tenacity of her officers and men."

During his period of command of the McFARIAND, he had brief additional duty as Commanding Officer of the Naval Base, Tulagi, in October-November 1942. Relieved in February 1943, he reported in March as Commanding Officer of the Naval Air Station, Brunswick, Maine. In August of the next year he was ordered to duty in connection with fitting out the USS ANTIETAM, as prospective Executive Officer. He served as Executive Officer of that carrier from her commissioning in January 1945, through the last months of the war and until October 1945.

From November 1945 until November 1947 he served as Chief Staff Officer to Commander Bremerton Group, Pacific Reserve Fleet, and under orders of September 25, 1947, he assumed command of the Naval Auxiliary Air Station, Monterey, California. On August 8, 1949 he was ordered relieved and to duty as Chief of Staff and Aide to Commander Fleet Air, Guam. While in that assignment he had detached duty, under Commander Naval Forces, Far East, in connection with the establishment of Fleet Air Wing ONE Detachment, and for his "fine professional knowledge of aviation and administration..." at this time, he received a Letter of Commendation, with authorization to wear the Commendation Ribbon, from the Commander Naval Forces, Far East.

In October 1950 he assumed command of the USS BADOENG STRAIT, and for "exceptionally meritorious conduct...(in that capacity) during operations against the enemy aggressor forces in Korea from 4 November 1950 to 15 January 1951..." he was awarded the Legion of Merit. The citation further states in part:

"Operating his vessel and its embarked air group as a superb tactical unit in carrying out successful attacks against the enemy troop concentrations, communications, aircraft and supply areas, Captain Alderman maintained the highest standards of performance in all phases of these vital operations, thereby providing excellent support for friendly ground forces..."

Detached from command of the BADOENG STRAIT in December 1951, he was assigned to the Bureau of Aeronautics, Navy Department, Washington, D. C. where he served as Director of the Shore Establishments Division. In February 1954 he assumed command of the USS PRINCETON (CVS 37), and a year later became Chief of Staff and Aide to Commander Carrier Division 3. Under orders of September 8, 1955 he was detached for duty as Commanding Officer of the Naval Air Station, Naval Air Missile Test Center, Point Mugu, California.

In addition to the Navy Cross, the Legion of Merit with Combat "V," the Commendation Ribbon, and the Ribbon for the Presidential Unit Citation, Captain Alderman has the China Service Medal; the American Defense Service Medal, Fleet Clasp; the American Campaign Medal; Asiatic-Pacific Campaign Medal with two combat stars; the World War II Victory Medal; the Navy Occupation Service Medal (Asia Clasp); the National Defense Service Medal; the Korean Service Medal; and the United Nations Service Medal.