

COMMANDER JOHN BAUMEISTER, Jr.
UNITED STATES NAVY

John Baumeister, Jr., was born in Quintette, Florida, on June 4, 1912, son of John and Florence (Johnson) Baumeister. He attended Tate Agricultural School at Gonzales, Florida, and Alabama Polytechnic Institute, Auburn, Alabama, before his appointment to the U. S. Naval Academy in 1932. Entering the Academy as Midshipman from Florida on June 13, 1932, he was graduated and commissioned Ensign on June 4, 1936. Through subsequent promotions he attained the rank of Commander, to date from March 15, 1944.

He reported to the USS LEXINGTON soon after graduation in June 1936, and after six months' duty in that aircraft carrier was ordered in February 1937 to the Office of the Inspector of Machinery, USN, at Newport News, Virginia, to assist in fitting out the USS YORKTOWN. He served aboard that carrier from her commissioning, in September 1937, until March 1938, and in May of that year joined the USS ENTERPRISE, in which he remained until June 1941.

After brief duty at the Naval Training School, Bowdoin College, Brunswick, Maine, and the Naval Research Laboratory, Anacostia, D. C., he rejoined the ENTERPRISE in October 1941, and was aboard that carrier when the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor on December 7 that year. In her he participated in the Gilbert and Marshall Islands Raid; Wake and Marcus Islands Raids; Battle of Midway; Occupation of Guadalcanal; and the Battle of Stewart Islands.

He is entitled to the Ribbon for, and a facsimile of, the Presidential Unit Citation awarded the ENTERPRISE as follows: "For consistently outstanding performance and distinguished achievement during repeated action against enemy Japanese forces in the Pacific War area, December 7, 1941, to November 15, 1942. Participating in nearly every major engagement in the first year of the war, the ENTERPRISE and her Air Group.....did sink or damage, on her own, a total of 35 Japanese vessels and shoot down a total of 185 Japanese aircraft. Her aggressive spirit and superb combat efficiency are fitting tribute to the officers and men who so gallantly established her as a solid bulwark in defense of the American Nation."

Returning to Annapolis in October 1942, he attended the Naval Postgraduate School for two years, and from July to November 1944 had duty at the Naval Training School, Newport, Rhode Island. He then joined the newly commissioned USS BON HOMME RICHARD in which he served until June 1945. During that period, after her shakedown cruise to Trinidad, B. W. I. the BON HOMME RICHARD transited the Panama Canal and joined the Fast Carrier Force in the Pacific. She departed Pearl Harbor for Ulithi, Caroline Islands, arriving on June 3.

Upon his detachment he reported for duty on the staff of Commander U. S. Naval Forces, Navy No. 3256, and in September 1945, after the Japanese surrender, he transferred to the staff of the Commander, Naval Operating Base, Okinawa, for two months' service. From April 1946 until July 1948 he had successive duty as a member of the staffs of Commander in Chief, Pacific Fleet and Commander FIRST Task Fleet.

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In September 1948 he reported to the Office of the Chief of Naval Operations, Navy Department, Washington, D. C., where he served until November 1951. He again had orders to sea duty, and in February 1952 joined the staff of Commander Destroyer Force, Atlantic Fleet. In April 1952 he assumed command of the USS STODDARD (DD 566).

Commander Baumeister has the American Defense Service Medal; the Asiatic-Pacific Campaign Medal with stars; the American Campaign Medal; the World War II Victory Medal; and the Philippine Defense Ribbon.

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