

CAPTAIN HARRY P. BADGER
UNITED STATES NAVY

Harry Peaslee Badger was born in Malone, New York, on October 19, 1907, son of John P. and Marion Manville Badger. He attended Franklin Academy, in Malone, and on June 30, 1925 enlisted in the U. S. Navy. On July 12, 1926 he was honorably discharged to enter the U. S. Naval Academy as a Midshipman with the Class of 1930. He was graduated and commissioned Ensign on June 5, 1930, and subsequently advanced to the rank of Captain, to date from July 1, 1949, having previously served in that rank (temporary) from January 25, 1946, until December 1, 1947.

Following graduation from the Naval Academy in June 1930, he reported in August to the USS MARBLEHEAD, in which he served as a junior officer until September 1931. He then began flight instruction at the Naval Air Station, Pensacola, Florida, but was detached in March 1932 for further sea duty on board the USS MILWAUKEE. In March 1934 he returned to Pensacola and completed flight training with designation as Naval Aviator (heavier than air) in April 1935. Ordered to report to Commander Aircraft, Battle Force, he was assigned to Fighting Squadron 5-B, based on the USS LEXINGTON, in which he served as a pilot from June 1935 until July 1937.

Duty for six months with Fighting Squadron 4, of the USS RANGER preceded a tour of shore duty as an instructor at the Naval Air Station, Pensacola, which ended in November 1939. He then reported to Utility Squadron ONE, and was serving with that squadron, aviation unit of the USS RIGEL (ARB 1), at anchor at Pearl Harbor, when the Japanese attacked the Fleet there on December 7, 1941. He remained with that squadron until June 1942, and for eighteen months thereafter served at the Intelligence Center for the Pacific Ocean Areas, Fourteenth Naval District Headquarters, Pearl Harbor.

He was awarded the Air Medal with the following citation: "For meritorious achievement in aerial flight as a Pilot in Utility Squadron ONE, during operations against enemy Japanese forces in the vicinity of the Hawaiian Islands from December 10, 1941 to April 11, 1942. During this trying period when the Naval air strength in the Hawaiian Area was at its lowest ebb due to damage suffered by the Japanese attack, Lieutenant Badger flew numerous long patrol, search and convoy missions in non-combatant type aircraft which had already seen long service. These aircraft which had been damaged during the attack were hastily repaired, armed with a small caliber gun and pressed into service during a time of great national stress. Frequently returning to a blacked-out base after dark without the use of navigational and radio aids, he effected safe landings on an unlighted field without the assistance of aircraft landing lights..."

He again returned to Pensacola in January 1944, this time for duty at the Naval Training School (Photography), and two years later was detached for a year's duty in the Naval Photographic Service, Office of the Chief of Naval Operations, Navy Department, Washington, D. C. From January to May 1947 he served as Commanding Officer of the now Navy Photographic Center, Naval Air Station, Anacostia, D. C. From July 1947 to November 1948 he served at sea as Commander, Observation Wing, Pacific Fleet, under cognizance of Commander Battleships-Cruisers, Pacific Fleet, with additional duty as Observation Sub-Type Commander, Air Force, Pacific Fleet.

He reported in November 1948 to the Naval Air Station, Agana, Guam, for duty with Transport Squadron 6. His squadron was soon ordered to Germany, however, and he took command on January 12, 1949. VR-6 operated twelve planes from Rhein/Main Field, near Frankfurt, in the Berlin Airlift, and with another similar squadron, VR-8, flew many tons of supplies into Russian-blockaded Berlin during the crucial winter months of 1948-1949. He was awarded the Legion of Merit by the Department of the Air Force (General Order #84, dated October 11, 1949) for "exceptionally meritorious conduct in the performance of outstanding service during the period January 9, 1949 to May 12, 1949..."

Instruction at the Naval War College, Newport, Rhode Island, in 1951-1952 was followed by a second tour of duty in the Office of the Chief of Naval Operations, this time as Head, Civil Aviation Liaison Branch, in the Flight Services Division. He was detached after two years there, and in May 1954 assumed command of the USS GILBERT ISLANDS (CVE 107). He reported in January 1955 to the staff of Commander Military Air Transport Service, Andrews Air Force Base, Washington, D. C., and on October 21, 1955 became the Senior Naval Officer attached to that command. In June 1957 he was ordered to duty as Commanding Officer of the Naval Station, Bermuda.

Besides the Legion of Merit (Air Force), and the Air Medal, Captain Badger has the American Defense Service Medal, Fleet Clasp; the American Campaign Medal; Asiatic-Pacific Campaign Medal, with star; the World War II Victory Medal; Navy Occupation Service Medal, Berlin Airlift Clasp; and the National Defense Service Medal.