

REAR ADMIRAL JOHN BALL, SUPPLY CORPS,
UNITED STATES NAVY, RETIRED

NAVAL HISTORY DIVISION

John Ball was born in Artesia, California, on August 31, 1893, and attended public schools of Los Angeles, California, and the University of Southern California at Los Angeles. He enlisted in the Navy on April 1, 1912, and served during World War I as a Pay Clerk. He was appointed Assistant Paymaster with the rank of Ensign (temporary) to rank from January 1, 1919. On September 26, 1921, he was appointed Assistant Paymaster with the rank of Ensign, Supply Corps, to rank from June 6, 1919, and subsequently progressed in the various grades. His selection to the rank of Rear Admiral was confirmed by the Senate on January 23, 1948, to rank from January 17, 1944. He transferred to the Retired List of the Navy in that rank on June 1, 1950.

During strained relations between the United States and Mexico, prior to World War I, he served as a yeoman in the USS COLORADO, USS SAN DIEGO, and USS RALEIGH consecutively, operating with the Pacific Fleet off the west coast of Mexico. After the United States entered the war with Germany he served aboard the USS AROOSTOOK, minelayer, based in northern Scotland for minelaying operations in the North Sea. Following the Armistice, he served as Ensign, Supply Corps, in the USS NANSEMOND, a troop transport of the Cruiser and Transport Force, engaged in returning the American Expeditionary Forces from France.

From September 1919 until May, 1920, he served as Supply Officer of the USS ILLINOIS, and following temporary duty in the Receiving Ship at Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, had duty as Assistant Supply Officer of the USS REINA MERCEDES, Naval Academy station ship, from July to November, 1920. He next had a tour of duty as Supply and Disbursing Officer of the Naval Ammunition Depot, Fort Mifflin, Pennsylvania, until detached in March, 1922.

Six months' instruction at the Supply Corps School of Application and in the Bureau of Supplies and Accounts, Navy Department, Washington, D.C., was followed by duty at the Naval Supply Depot, San Diego, California, from September, 1922 until June, 1923. He then joined the USS MELVILLE as Assistant Supply Officer. Detached in October, 1925, he reported to the Navy Yard, Puget Sound, Bremerton, Washington, where he served until March, 1929. In April of that year he became Assistant Supply Officer for Disbursing in the USS ARGONNE, a tender with Submarine Division 20, Battle Fleet, at San Diego. He served in that assignment for two years.

From August, 1931 until September, 1936, he had shore duty consecutively at the Naval Supply Depot, Naval Operating Base, Hampton Roads, Virginia; under instruction at the Army Quartermaster Subsistence School, Chicago, Illinois; as Commissary Officer of the Naval Training Station, Naval Operating Base, San Diego, California; and Assistant Supply Officer at the Navy Yard, Pearl Harbor, Hawaii. In September, 1936 he joined the USS BUSHNELL as Supply Officer and Force Supply Officer, Submarine Force, U.S. Fleet. Returning to the United States in July, 1938, he became Assistant Supply Officer of the Navy Yard, Mare Island, California.

From March, 1940 until June, 1941, he served as Supply Officer of the USS ALTAIR, destroyer tender on the West Coast. Returning to duty ashore, he served in connection with establishing the Naval Supply Depot at Oakland, California, and had duty as Assistant Officer in Charge there from October, 1941 until April, 1943. He was then ordered to the Tenth Naval District, San Juan, Puerto Rico, for duty as District Supply Officer, with additional duty as Supervisory Cost Inspector and Area Petroleum Officer.

Ordered to the Naval Supply Depot, Spokane, Washington, in July, 1944, he was serving as Supply Officer in Command at the end of the War, and continued in that duty until transferred in February, 1946 to similar duty at the Naval Supply Depot, Clearfield, Utah. In May and June, 1947, he had temporary duty at the Navy Department, Bureau of Supplies and Accounts, reporting in July for duty as Supply Officer in Command, Yards and Docks Supply Office, Naval Construction Battalion Center, Naval Station, Port Hueneme, California.

He was ordered in March, 1948, as Supply Officer in Command, Naval Supply Depot, Mechanicsburg, Pennsylvania, his designation of title being changed in December, 1949 to Commanding Officer. He was so serving when he was relieved of active duty and transferred to the Retired List of the Navy effective June 1, 1950.

Rear Admiral Ball has the Mexican Service Medal (USS RALEIGH); the Victory Medal with Mine Layer Clasp (USS AROCSTOCK); the American Defense Service Medal, Fleet Clasp (USS ALTAIR); the American Campaign Medal; and the World War II Victory Medal.

28 August 1950