

Deceased 6 Dec 1972

NAVAL HISTORY DIVISION

REAR ADMIRAL ROBERT O. CANADA, JR.
MEDICAL CORPS, UNITED STATES NAVY, RETIRED

Robert Owen Canada, Jr., was born in Grottoes, Virginia, on July 16, 1913, son of Mrs. R. O. (Mary Crawford) Canada and the late Dr. Canada. He attended Augusta Military Academy, Fort Defiance, Virginia, and received the degrees of Bachelor of Science from the University, of Virginia, Charlottesville, and Doctor of Medicine from that University's School of Medicine. He was commissioned Lieutenant (junior grade) in the Medical Corps of the U. S. Navy on July 16, 1938, after completing his internship, and was subsequently advanced in rank to that of Rear Admiral, to date from July 1, 1964.

Ordered first to the U. S. Naval Hospital, Portsmouth, Virginia, he served as Ward Medical Officer there from August 1938 to April 1940, then reported to the USS SALINAS (AO-19) for duty as Medical Officer. He was serving in that capacity when the SALINAS was torpedoed off Iceland by a German submarine on October 30, 1941, prior to the outbreak of World War II. Detached in December 1941, he served until March 1944, as Officer in Charge of the Navy Unit at Fitzsimmons General Hospital, Denver, Colorado.

During the latter period of the war, he was again at sea serving as Senior Medical Officer of the USS PASADENA (CL-65) from her commissioning in June 1944, until November 1945. The PASADENA operated in the Pacific combat area from September 1944 until August 15, 1945, participating in the capture and occupation of the Southern Palau Islands in September and October 1944; with the THIRD Fleet in the Leyte operation (including Luzon attacks) and the Luzon operation (including attacks on Luzon, Formosa, the China Coast and Nansei Shoto); with the FIFTH Fleet in the assault and occupation of Iwo Jima; raids on Nansei Shoto; the Okinawa operation (including the assault and occupation of Okinawa Gunto); and THIRD Fleet operations against Japan. She was in the Tokyo Bay Area during the Japanese surrender and subsequently participated in the occupation of Japan.

Returning to the United States, he reported in December 1945, to the Naval Hospital, Sampson, New York, where he served as Assistant Chief of Medicine until March 1947. He then had graduate instruction at Cornell Medical School, New York, New York, and in October of that year was detached for duty at the Navy Department, Washington, D. C. There he served as Head of the Tuberculosis Control Section, Bureau of Medicine and Surgery, until August 1950, when he was transferred to the Naval Hospital, National Naval Medical Center, Bethesda, Maryland, as Assistant Chief of Medicine and Head of the Chest Disease Section. In June 1952, he reported as Chief of Medicine at the Naval Hospital, Charleston, South Carolina.

In June 1955 he was detached from Charleston for similar duty at the Naval Hospital, Oakland, California, and from February 1959 to June 1961 was Chief of Medicine at the Naval Hospital, National Naval Medical Center, Bethesda, Maryland. He was next in command of the Naval Hospital at the Naval Air Station, Jacksonville, Florida, and in February 1962 returned to the Naval Hospital, National Naval Medical Center, Bethesda, Maryland. He commanded that Naval Hospital for three years and in February 1965 was assigned as Deputy and Assistant Chief of the Bureau of Medicine and Surgery, Navy Department, Washington, D. C. "For exceptionally meritorious service from February 1965 to March 1968..." he was awarded the Legion of Merit and cited as follows:

"...Rear Admiral Canada has made major contributions to the achievements of the Bureau of Medicine and Surgery, and to the increased effectiveness of the services provided to the operating forces. He accompanied the Vice Chief of Naval Operations on an extensive tour of naval facilities in Vietnam and Southeast Asia, and visited many of naval medical facilities ashore and afloat. As a result of these visits (he) was able to make on-the-spot observations and recommendations which resulted in improved medical support to our fighting forces. Exhibiting outstanding executive ability, he has insured the maximum medical and technical advancement in the Medical Corps, and has generated the highest order of enthusiasm and morale among the medical and technical staffs. For many years, (he) has been engaged in research in diseases of the chest. During this tour of duty, he has continued his research activities, particularly in respect to study on emphysema. He recently helped plan and moderate an important meeting at the National Research Council on the Pulmonary Effects of Non-Thoracic Trauma..."

He assumed command of the National Naval Medical Center, Bethesda, in March 1968 and was awarded a Gold Star in lieu of the Second Legion of Merit with the following citation: "For exceptionally meritorious service from March 1968 to August 1969...Rear Admiral Canada has directed and led the many component commands of the Medical Center toward improved management and greater effectiveness. During this period, the missions and functions of the Naval Medical School have been reoriented and updated to meet the present needs of the Medical Department. Numerous functions have been added to the School, while others have been appropriately transferred to other commands. (He) personally stimulated clinical research in the Naval Hospital, and has actively influenced the activities of the Naval Medical Research Institute, especially in research concerning the training and utilization of hospital corpsmen..."

On August 1, 1969 he was transferred to the Retired List of the U. S. Navy.

In addition to the Legion of Merit with Gold Star, Rear Admiral Canada has the American Defense Service Medal with bronze "A"; the American Campaign Medal; Asiatic-Pacific Campaign Medal with one silver star and one bronze star (six operations); the World War II Victory Medal; Navy Occupation Service Medal, Asia Clasp; National Defense Service Medal with bronze star; and the Philippine Liberation Ribbon with one star.

Dr. Canada is a Diplomate, American Board of Internal Medicine; a Fellow of the American College of Physicians and the American College of Chest Physicians; and a member of the American Thoracic Society and the American Medical Association.