

COMMODORE JAMES BENHAM CARTER, U.S. NAVY, RETIRED

James Benham Carter was born in Ozark, Arkansas, on December 28, 1896. He attended Ozark High School and Hendrix College, Conway, Arkansas (Class of 1918) before entering the U.S. Naval Academy, Annapolis, Maryland, on senatorial appointment from Arkansas in June, 1916. He had World War I service as a midshipman aboard the USS ARIZONA during the summer of 1917, and in the USS KANSAS in 1918, both battleships operating with the Atlantic Fleet. Graduated and commissioned Ensign on June 7, 1919, he attained the rank of Captain to date from June 18, 1942. He was appointed Commodore for temporary service, to rank from November 10, 1944, reverting to Captain in December, 1945. When transferred to the Retired List of the Navy on June 30, 1949, he was again advanced to Commodore.

Following his graduation in 1919, he remained at the Naval Academy on duty in the Executive Department, and reported on October 2, 1919 for temporary duty aboard the USS CONNECTICUT. Transferred several weeks later, he served in the USS MINNESOTA, flagship of Division 4, Battle Squadron 2, Atlantic Fleet, based at Norfolk, Virginia, until May 3, 1920. He then reported to the Navy Yard, New York, New York, for duty in connection with fitting out the USS TENNESSEE. When that battleship was commissioned on June 3, 1920, he had duty aboard until August 24, 1921. He next reported to the USS TEXAS for a tour of almost two years. On July 5, 1923, he reported for duty in connection with fitting out the cruiser RALEIGH at the Bethlehem Shipbuilding Corporation, Quincy, Massachusetts, and served from her commissioning, February 6, 1924 until the following December.

Reporting on December 8, 1924, for duty at the Naval Air Station, Lakehurst, New Jersey, he subsequently qualified as Naval Aviator (lighter-than-air) on March 10, 1927, and was ordered to duty aboard the dirigible LOS ANGELES as one of her pilots from May 17, 1927, with additional duty at Naval Air Station, Lakehurst, until December 8, 1928. He next served for two and one half years with Destroyer Squadrons, Asiatic Station, having consecutive duty aboard the flagship USS BLACK HAWK, the USS BARKER, the USS PILLSBURY, and the USS EDSALL. He participated in the Yangtze River valley operations while attached to the latter destroyer in 1931.

A tour of duty at the Naval Observatory, Washington, D.C. from August, 1931 until May, 1933, was followed by two years served as Aide and Flag Secretary on the staff of Commander, Base Force, U.S. Fleet, in the USS ARGONNE, flagship. Relieved of staff duty, he reported on March 16, 1934 to the USS TENNESSEE for duty as her Assistant Engineer Officer, serving from June, 1935 until June, 1936. On July 25, 1936 he reported to the Georgia School of Technology, Atlanta Georgia, in connection with the Naval Reserve Officers Training Corps Unit, and served in that assignment until June 8, 1938.

He served as Commanding Officer of the USS REID, operating with Destroyers, Battle Force, until May 29, 1941, when he had orders to the Naval War College, Newport, Rhode Island, for instruction. He completed the command course there in December, 1941 and remained to serve on the staff of that College until June, 1943. Ordered then to report to the Commander-in-Chief, Pacific Fleet, he served first as naval member of the War Plans Division, and later, in the rank of

Commodore, as Assistant Chief of Staff for Operations. He was awarded the Legion of Merit, the citation stating: "For exceptionally meritorious conduct in the performance of outstanding service on the Staff of the Commander-in-Chief, United States Pacific Fleet and Pacific Ocean Areas, from July 20, 1943 to September 1, 1945. . . . He demonstrated outstanding professional ability and perception in the preparation of plans and broad directives covering propaganda and psychological warfare and in coordinating requirements for Naval surface forces and assault shipping, . . . and exercised excellent judgment and efficiency in discharging his vital responsibility for coordination of operations"

Returning to the United States and reverting in rank to Captain in December, 1945, he assumed command of the USS LOS ANGELES, cruiser, and served in that command until September, 1946. He then had orders transferring him to the Office of the Chief of Naval Operations, Navy Department, Washington, D. C., where he was Assistant Strategic Plans Officer. He was again assigned duty on the staff of the Commander-in-Chief, Pacific Fleet, as Assistant Chief of Staff for Plans, serving in that duty from December, 1947 until relieved of active duty and transferred to the Retired List of the Navy, effective June 30, 1949.

In addition to the Legion of Merit, Commodore Carter has the Victory Medal, Escort Clasp (USS KANSAS); the Yangtze Service Medal (USS EDSALL); the American Defense Service Medal, Fleet Clasp (USS REID); the American Campaign Medal, the Asiatic-Pacific Campaign Medal and the World War II Victory Medal.

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