

VICE ADMIRAL EDWARD C. EWEN
UNITED STATES NAVY, DECEASED

Edward Coyle Ewen was born in Portsmouth, New Hampshire, on May 26, 1897, son of George S. and Jessica (Coots) Ewen. He attended Portsmouth High School and Tilton (New Hampshire) Academy, and in 1917 entered the U. S. Naval Academy, Annapolis, Maryland, upon appointment from his native state. As a Midshipman he served during World War I (the summer of 1918), aboard the USS WISCONSIN, operating with the Atlantic Fleet; was active in athletics, winning his letter in football and lacrosse, was Captain of the football team for two years, and was awarded the Sword presented annually by the Navy Athletic Association to the Midshipman who excelled in athletics. Graduated and commissioned Ensign on June 3, 1921, he subsequently progressed in rank, attaining that of Rear Admiral, to date from July 21, 1944. On February 1, 1957 he was transferred to the Retired List of the U. S. Navy and was advanced to the rank of Vice Admiral on the basis of combat awards.

Following graduation from the Naval Academy in 1921, he joined the USS FLORIDA, and in August 1923 was detached from that battleship for duty at the Naval Academy. He remained there until January 1924, when he was ordered to the Naval Air Station, Pensacola, Florida, for flight training. Designated Naval Aviator on August 15, 1924, he reported in December of that year for duty with Aircraft Squadrons, Battle Fleet, and was assigned to Scouting Squadron TWO. In July 1925 he transferred to Fighting Squadron TWO, and during January 1927 was attached to Fighting Squadron SIX.

Between February 1927 and May 1929 he was assigned to the Naval Air Station, Pensacola, Florida, after which he had instruction in aviation ordnance at the Postgraduate School, Annapolis, Maryland, and from March 1931 at the Navy Yard, Washington, D. C. In June 1932 he joined Fighting Squadron TWO B, based on the USS LEXINGTON and two years later, June 1934, transferred to Observation Squadron THREE B, aviation unit of the USS NEW MEXICO. In April 1935 he was ordered to the Naval Air Station, Anacostia, D. C., where he remained until June 1936. Following brief duty in the Office of the Chief of Naval Operations, Navy Department, Washington, D. C., he reported in August 1936 as Aviation Member of the Naval Mission to Brazil with headquarters in Rio de Janeiro.

He joined the USS ENTERPRISE in March 1939, and in May 1940, assumed command of the Air Group aboard that aircraft carrier. Returning to duty ashore in May 1941, he was assigned for two months in the Office of the Chief of Naval Operations, Navy Department, and in July became Assistant Naval Attache and Assistant Naval Attache for Air at the American Embassy, London, England. He continued to serve in that capacity until September 1941, when he was assigned to the Fleet Training Division, Office of the Chief of Naval Operations. In February 1942 he transferred to Headquarters, Commander in Chief, U. S. Fleet, Navy Department, where he remained until January 1943.

Ordered to the Seattle-Tacoma Shipbuilding Company, Tacoma, Washington, he was in charge of the fitting out of the USS BRETON. She was put into commission as an auxiliary aircraft carrier on April 12, 1943, and he assumed command. Under his command she operated along the West Coast until June 1943, when she was ordered to the Pacific assigned to the New Hebrides area. Detached from command of the BRETON in December 1943, he was next in command of Roi and Namur Islands in the Marshall Islands, February 1, 1944 until July 11, 1944, during the months following the American conquest of that area. For outstanding services in that capacity, he received a Letter of Commendation, with authorization to wear the Commendation Ribbon, from the Commander in Chief, U. S. Pacific Fleet, and the Legion of Merit with Combat "V." The citations follow in part:

Letter of Commendation: "For extraordinary heroism...as Commander of Roi Island, during the bombing of that island by enemy aircraft on the night of February 11-12, 1944...amidst an inferno of bursting bombs, shells and pyrotechnics caused by a bomb hit on an ammunition dump to direct the establishing of dressing stations and the evacuation of the wounded. By his presence and courage he inspired his officers and men..."

Legion of Merit: "For exceptionally meritorious conduct...as Commander of Roi and Namur, Marshall Islands, during operations against enemy Japanese forces in that vicinity from January 1 to July 11, 1944...(He) was responsible in large measure for the almost immediate establishment of aircraft facilities at Roi and, in his additional capacity as Commanding Officer of the Roi Naval Air Base, he planned and supervised the construction of a base from which the enemy present in the Marshall Islands could be sought out and destroyed..."

In July 1944 he assumed command of the USS INDEPENDENCE, and for meritorious conduct in that capacity, was awarded the Navy Cross and a Gold Star in lieu of a Second Legion of Merit with Combat "V." The citations follow in part:

Navy Cross: "For extraordinary heroism as Commanding Officer of the USS INDEPENDENCE, during operations against the enemy in September and October 1944. Expertly commanding the INDEPENDENCE in the first night carrier operations in the Pacific, (he) brought to bear the full fighting strength of his ship and air groups and, through his foresight and tactical ability, directed them in destroying hostile lead attack planes and airborne tractors to break up enemy air attacks before they could develop. His courage...during long periods of sustained action reflect the highest credit on Rear Admiral Ewen, his gallant officers and men and the United States Naval Service."

Gold Star in lieu of second Legion of Merit: "...as Commanding Officer of the USS INDEPENDENCE during operations against enemy Japanese forces in the Pacific War Area from August 29, 1944 to January 25, 1945...He was responsible for the development of most

of the current doctrine and tactics of night carrier operations and, by his inspiring leadership and resourcefulness, contributed materially to the success of the Navy in the Pacific...'

Relieved of command of the INDEPENDENCE on February 11, 1945, he served consecutively as Senior U. S. Naval Liaison Officer assigned to the British Carrier Task Force, and as Operations Officer of the Second Carrier Task Force, U. S. Pacific Fleet, until September 16, 1945. Subsequently he returned home and had temporary duty in the Office of the Chief of Naval Operations, Navy Department. For his services as U. S. Naval Liaison Officer with the British Carrier Task Force, from February 28 to September 1, 1945, he was awarded the Bronze Star Medal.

On November 19, 1945 he had orders as Chief of Naval Air Reserve Training, Naval Air Station, Glenview, Illinois, where he served until February 1948. On March 10, 1948 he became Chief of Public Relations, Executive Officer of the Secretary, Navy Department, and remained in that assignment until June 13, 1949, when he was ordered to duty as Commander, Fleet Air Guam, with additional duty as Commander Fleet Air Wing ONE. These orders were modified on July 26, 1949, and he reported as Commander Marianas, with additional duty as Commander Fleet Air Guam, and Commander Fleet Air Wing ONE. In December, when the Navy relinquished the governorship of Guam in favor of a civilian government, the title of this command was changed to Commander, Naval Forces, Marianas, with the same additional duties, and headquarters, at Agana.

On July 28, 1950 he became Commander Carrier Division ONE, Pacific Fleet, and in August 1950 assumed command of Task Force SEVENTY SEVEN, operating in the Korean area. For meritorious service in the latter command, he was awarded the Distinguished Service Medal and the Army Silver Star Medal. The citations follow in part:

Distinguished Service Medal: "For exceptionally meritorious service...as the Commander Task Force SEVENTY SEVEN in operations against enemy forces in the Korean area from July 31, 1950 to December 5, 1950. Directing various Task Units with great tactical skill and exceptional foresight, Rear Admiral Ewen enabled his pilots to attack shore installations throughout Korea and to furnish invaluable close air support to the ground forces fighting therein. Despite serious obstacles presented by sea and weather conditions vital air support was made available to ground forces where ever possible and his air strikes were carried to the rear of enemy-held territory throughout Korea. His complete knowledge of carrier air operations and grasp of the military situation made it possible for the naval air arm to give vital support to naval surface forces prior to and at Inchon during the period September 1 to September 21, 1950 and again during the Wonsan landing..."

Army Silver Star Medal: He "distinguished himself by conspicuous gallantry in action in the Inchon-Seoul operations during the period September 15-21, 1950. His actions contributed materially to the success of this operation..."

He returned to the United States and on June 25, 1951, became Commander Fleet Air, Alameda, California, and in April 1954, transferred to duty as Commander Fleet Air, Eastern Atlantic and Mediterranean. He continued to serve in that capacity until February 1956. He was hospitalized for a year prior to his retirement, effective February 1, 1957.

In addition to the Navy Cross, the Distinguished Service Medal, the Army Silver Star Medal, the Legion of Merit with Gold Star and Combat "V," the Bronze Star Medal, and the Commendation Ribbon with Combat "V," Vice Admiral Ewen has the Victory Medal, Atlantic Fleet Clasp (World War I); the American Defense Service Medal, Fleet Clasp; the Asiatic-Pacific Campaign Medal; the American Campaign Medal; the World War II Victory Medal; the Navy Occupation Service Medal, Asia Clasp; the National Defense Service Medal; the Korean Service Medal; the United Nations Service Medal; and the Philippine Liberation Ribbon with two bronze stars. He has also been awarded the Order of the British Empire, Third Class (Commander), by the Government of Great Britain.

Admiral Ewen died at the Naval Hospital, Bethesda, Maryland on August 13, 1959.