

# NAVAL HISTORY DIVISION

## COMMANDER FRED THOMAS BERRY, U.S. NAVY, DECEASED

Born at Logan, Iowa, November 23, 1887, Commander Berry was appointed a midshipman from Iowa, and entered the Naval Academy in June 1904. Upon graduation he served two years at sea in the USS COLORADO, USS TRUXTON, and USS PAUL JONES before receiving his commission as Ensign on June 6, 1910. He advanced in rank as follows: Lieutenant (junior grade), June, 1913; Lieutenant, August 29, 1916; Lieutenant Commander, February, 1918; Commander, June 1926.

Between May 1912 and October 1915, Commander Berry served in the USS DALE, Asiatic Station, transferred to the USS GALVESTON and was assigned to Engineering duty. He returned to the Naval Academy for the postgraduate course in steam engineering in October 1915, and had successive duty from June 1916 to July 1918 at the Navy Yard, Philadelphia as Assistant to the Officer in Charge of the Fuel Oil Plant; as Assistant to the Naval Inspector of Machinery at the Works of New York Shipbuilding Company, Camden, New Jersey; and returned to the Navy Yard, Philadelphia, in connection with fitting out the KRONPRINZ WILHELM (renamed the VON STEUBEN), and on board as Engineer Officer when commissioned.

In July 1918, Commander Berry was ordered to duty with the Destroyer Force in European waters aboard the USS BEALE, and in September at Queenstown, Ireland, he took command of the USS MC CALL; and when detached he had a brief duty as Engineer Officer in the USS ARKANSAS before assuming command of the USS CROSBY in January, 1919. Between that time and October, 1921, attached to Flotilla 4, he served successively in command of the USS BREEZE, the CROSBY again, in command of Division 18 of Destroyer Squadron 4, Pacific Fleet. Returning to Philadelphia, he reported to the William Cramp & Sons Co. for duty in connection with fitting out the USS MACLEISH and on board when commissioned, September 2, 1920. Attached to the Destroyer Force, Pacific Fleet, he had consecutive duty in command of the USS MONTGOMERY, USS MACLEISH, USS SIMPSON, and in the USS GREAT NORTHERN, which returned him to the Atlantic Coast.

From September, 1921 until the following June, Commander Berry served as Instructor in the Navigation Department, Naval Academy, returning at that time to sea duty as Engineer Officer of Destroyer Squadron 12, Destroyers, Battle Fleet, USS LITCHFIELD, flagship. When detached in April 1925, he took command of the USS FARQUHAR, and served until his return to the Naval Academy on June 2, 1927, for two years duty in the Executive Department.

On June 15, 1929, Commander Berry reported to the Naval Air Station, Lakehurst, New Jersey, for instruction and additional duty in Rigid Airship Training and Experimental Squadron, and three weeks later was designated Student Naval Aviator for lighter than air craft. The following February his orders read "duty involving flying under instruction." In July, 1930, he was designated Naval Aviator, and was assigned to the Experimental Squadron with additional duty as Executive Officer of the Lakehurst Naval Air Station.



In January 1931, Commander Berry had temporary additional duty in connection with Fleet maneuvers, attached to the USS LOS ANGELES, lighter-than-air craft, and the following June, when relieved of former duties, he was assigned to the LOS ANGELES, and took command in February, 1932. From June to November, he was Executive Officer of the Naval Air Station, Lakehurst, and in December assumed the duties of Commander Rigid Airship Training and Experimental Squadron, USS AKRON, with additional duty in command of Naval Air Station, Lakehurst where the squadron was based, this duty involving flying. He lost his life in the crash of the Airship AKRON off the coast of New Jersey, and died at sea April 4, 1933.

Commander Berry was awarded the Navy Cross for services during World War I, with the following citation:

"For distinguished service in the line of his profession as Commanding Officer of the USS McCALL, engaged in the important, exacting and hazardous duty of patrolling the waters infested with enemy submarines and mines, in escorting and protecting vitally important convoys of troops and supplies through these waters, and in offensive and defensive action, vigorously and unremittingly prosecuted against all forms of enemy naval activity."

He also had the Victory Medal with Destroyer Clasp.

Destroyer DD-858 has been named USS FRED T. BERRY in his honor, and is now with the Atlantic Fleet.

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17 June 1949