

CAPTAIN BENJAMIN B. CHEATHAM, U. S. NAVY, RETIRED

A destroyer man participating in operations in the Pacific Area in World War II Benjamin Ballard Cheatham later saw action at Inchon during the Korean hostilities as Assistant Operations Officer on the staff of Commander SEVENTH Fleet. For his outstanding service and conspicuous gallantry during these periods he was awarded the Silver Star Medal, the Bronze Star Medal and a Gold Star in lieu of a Second Bronze Star Medal.

Born in Atlanta, Georgia, he graduated from the Naval Academy in 1933. He subsequently had duty afloat in the battleship ARIZONA, the cruisers SAN FRANCISCO and CONCORD, the destroyers PERRY, ZANE and DALE and the submarine tender BUSHNELL, which was then assigned to Hydrographic Survey duty. In June 1941 he was assigned to the Office of the Chief of Naval Operations, Navy Department, and was serving there when the United States entered World War II. Between January and May 1943 he was Executive Officer of the USS SCHROEDER, after which he commanded the USS COGLAN. In the summer of 1945 he assumed command of the USS McCAFFERY and in March 1947 was detached to return to duty in the Office of the Chief of Naval Operations.

In July 1950 he joined the staff of Commander SEVENTH Fleet as Assistant Operations Officer and in March 1951 transferred, in a similar capacity, to the staff of Commander FIRST Fleet. For a year (July 1951-July 1952) he was in command of Destroyer Division TWELVE and after instruction at the Naval War College, again had duty in the Office of the Chief of Naval Operations. He commanded the attack transport VERMILION from March 1956 until April 1957 and in June became Commander Destroyer Squadron SIXTEEN. In October 1958 he was assigned to the Joint Staff (Logistics), Office of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Washington, D. C., where he remained until relieved of all active duty pending his retirement, effective April 1, 1961.

CAPTAIN BENJAMIN BALLARD CHEATHAM, U. S. NAVY, RETIRED

PERSONAL DATA:

Born: 28 November 1910, Atlanta, Georgia
Parents: James Bullock and Nena Parker (Ballard) Cheatham, both now deceased

Education: Marion (Alabama) Institute (1929); University of Florida, Gainesville (1927-1929); U. S. Naval Academy, Annapolis, Md. (BS, 1933); Naval Air Station, Pensacola, Fla. (flight training); Naval War College, Newport, R. I. (strategy and tactics course, 1952-1953)

PROMOTIONS:

Commissioned Ensign, USN, 1 June 1933
Lieutenant (junior grade), USN, 1 June 1936
Lieutenant, USN, 1 January 1941
Lieutenant Commander, USN, 1 October 1942
Commander, USN, 1 January 1944
Captain, USN, 1 January 1952

MEDALS AND AWARDS:

Silver Star Medal
Bronze Star Medal with Combat "V"
Gold Star in lieu of the Second Bronze Star Medal with "V"
American Defense Service Medal with star
American Campaign Medal
Asiatic-Pacific Campaign Medal with silver star (five engagements)
World War II Victory Medal
China Service Medal
Navy Occupation Service Medal
National Defense Service Medal
Korean Service Medal with five stars
United Nations Service Medal
Philippine Liberation Ribbon
Korean Presidential Unit Citation

CITATIONS:

Silver Star Medal: "For conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity as Commanding Officer of the USS COGHLAN, in action against enemy Japanese forces at Ormoc, Leyte Philippine Islands, December 11-12, 1944. Screening a convoy which was carrying urgently-needed supplies to isolated U. S. Army forces, Commander Cheatham skillfully maneuvered his ship and effectively directed her batteries against enemy planes in two heavy daylight air attacks and intermittent night harrassment, thereby contributing materially to the successful completion of the mission..."

Capt. B. B. Cheatham, USN, Ret.

Bronze Star Medal: "For meritorious service as Commanding Officer of the USS COGHLAN in action against enemy Japanese forces in the Pacific War Area from August 8, 1943 to October 12, 1944. During this prolonged period of operations, Commander Cheatham directed his ship in the bombardment of Wake Island, the assault and occupation of Saipan and Tinian, and the protection of landings at Ormoc Bay. Effectively evading or driving off enemy air attacks he carried out his hazardous duties without damage to his ship..."

Gold Star in lieu of the Second Bronze Star Medal: "For meritorious service as Readiness Officer and Assistant Operations Officer on the staff of Commander SEVENTH Fleet during operations against enemy aggressor forces in the Korean Theater from July 31, 1950 to March 28, 1951. Exercising outstanding ability and professional skill, Captain (then Commander) Cheatham assisted directly in supervising and coordinating the employment of the forces of the Fleet during an extremely critical period. By his sound knowledge of the operational and tactical requirements involved in this task and by his constant attention to important details, he was largely responsible for the maintenance of the Fleet at a high degree of efficiency and readiness, thereby contributing materially to the success of vital operations against the enemy..."

CHRONOLOGICAL TRANSCRIPT OF NAVAL SERVICE:

Jun 1933 - Dec 1933	USS ARIZONA
Jan 1934 - May 1935	USS SAN FRANCISCO
Jun 1935 - Sep 1935	Naval Air Station, Pensacola, Fla. (flight training)
Sep 1935 - May 1936	USS PERRY
May 1936 - Dec 1937	USS ZANE (Gunnery Officer)
Feb 1938 - Feb 1940	USS BUSHNELL (Hydrographic Survey duty)
Feb 1940 - Jun 1940	USS DALE
Jun 1940 - Jun 1941	USS CONCORD (Ass't Engineering Officer)
Jun 1941 - Nov 1942	Office of the Chief of Naval Operations, Navy Dept. (Administration, Op. 13)
Jan 1943 - May 1943	USS SCHROEDER (Executive Officer)
Jul 1943 - Mar 1945	USS COGHLAN (Commanding Officer)
Jul 1945 - Mar 1947	USS McCAFFERY (Commanding Officer)
Mar 1947 - Jul 1950	Office of the Chief of Naval Operations, Navy Dept. (Logistics, Op. 414)
Jul 1950 - Mar 1951	Staff, Commander SEVENTH Fleet (Ass't Operations Officer)
Mar 1951 - Jun 1951	Staff, Commander FIRST Fleet (Ass't Operations Officer)
Jul 1951 - Jul 1952	Commander Destroyer Division 12
Aug 1952 - Jun 1953	Naval War College, Newport, R. I. (student)
Jun 1953 - Feb 1956	Office of the Chief of Naval Operations (Logistics, Op. 43F)
Mar 1956 - Apr 1957	USS VERMILION (CO)
Jun 1957 - Aug 1958	Commander Destroyer Squadron 16
Oct 1958 -	Joint Staff (Logistics), Office of the Joint Chiefs of Staff
Apr 1, 1961	Retired

NAVY - Office of Information
Biographies Branch
21 April 1961