

NAVAL HISTORY DIVISION

CAPTAIN RICHARD P. CARLSON
CIVIL ENGINEER CORPS, U. S. NAVY

Richard Pierce Carlson was born on May 18, 1903, in Washington, D. C., son of Carl A. and Amelia C. (Pierce) Carlson. He attended public schools and The Swavelly School in Washington, and in 1918 was employed as a boat builder's helper in construction of small boats and tugs. On June 16, 1920, he entered the U. S. Naval Academy on appointment as Midshipman, at large, and while there was a member of the class wrestling squad and varsity tennis team. He was graduated and commissioned Assistant Civil Engineer with rank of Ensign on June 5, 1924, and through subsequent promotions attained the rank of Captain in the Civil Engineer Corps, to date from June 1, 1943.

In July 1924, after graduation from the Naval Academy, he reported to the USS IDAHO, in which he served as Assistant Fire Control Officer and Division Officer until August 1925. In September he returned to Annapolis for instruction in Naval Construction at the Postgraduate School and, continuing the course at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, Troy, New York, he was graduated with the degree of Civil Engineer in June 1927 and a Master's degree in Civil Engineering in June 1928. He had brief familiarization duty in the Bureau of Yards and Docks, Navy Department, and from October 1928 until June 1930 served as Assistant Public Works Officer at the Navy Yard, Pearl Harbor, T. H.

Returning to the United States, he served from July 1930 to October 1934 as Assistant District Public Works Officer, Eleventh Naval District, with Headquarters in San Diego, California. He then reported to the Naval Station, New Orleans, Louisiana, where he had duty until June 1936 as Public Works Officer. Duty as Assistant Public Works Officer of the Navy Yard, Charleston, South Carolina, preceded a tour of duty as Public Works Officer from February 1938 until April 1942, at the Marine Barracks, Farris Island, S. C., during which period the United States entered World War II.

From April 1942 to May 1943 he commenced and completed, then operated as Officer in Charge and Public Works Officer, respectively all Naval activities at Memphis, Tennessee, including the Naval Air Station, Naval Hospital and the Naval Air Technical Training Center. He then returned to the Naval Academy to serve as Assistant Buildings and Grounds Officer, with additional duty as Officer in Charge of Bureau of Yards and Docks Contracts. He was detached in February 1944, and for four months thereafter served as Officer in Charge of the Advance Base Depot, Gulfport, Mississippi, and Officer in Charge of the Construction Battalion Training Center.

During the last year of the war, he organized, completed, and operated, as Officer in Charge, the Advance Base Depot, Tacoma, Washington. For outstanding performance of duty as Officer in Charge of that Depot, from July 15, 1944 to September 7, 1945, he received a Commendatory Letter from the Assistant Secretary of the

Navy, dated February 14, 1946. The letter states that he "displayed great energy in pushing to completion construction of this Depot, which was urgently needed for the handling of the rapidly increasing shipments of equipment and material for the construction of advance bases..."

In October 1945 he reported to the Navy Department for duty first, in the Bureau of Yards and Docks as Assistant to the Director of Construction, and from February 1946 to January 1948 in the Industrial Survey Division of the Executive Office of the Secretary. He next served as District Public Works Officer and District Civil Engineer in the Seventeenth Naval District, with Headquarters at Kodiak, Alaska. Detached in October 1949, he reported to the Puget Sound Naval Shipyard, Bremerton, Washington, for duty as Public Works Officer, and additionally served until March 1952, as Public Works Officer of the Naval Base there.

Duty from April 1952 until August 1953 as Assistant Chief of Staff for Base Development, on the staff of Commander Naval Forces, Marianas, included the assignment of Officer in Charge, Bureau of Yards and Docks Contracts. When detached, he returned to the United States, reporting in September 1953, as District Civil Engineer, Twelfth Naval District, San Francisco, California. He continues to serve in that capacity.

Captain Carlson has the American Defense Service Medal; the American Campaign Medal; the World War II Victory Medal; and the National Defense Service Medal,

Captain Carlson is a member of the Society of American Military Engineers, and he is an enthusiast of golf, bowling, swimming, and photography.

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