

ADMIRAL OSCAR CHARLES BADGER
UNITED STATES NAVY (RETIRED)

Oscar Charles Badger, born in Washington, D. C. on June 26, 1890, son of the late Rear Admiral Charles J. Badger, U.S.N., was appointed to the United States Naval Academy by President Theodore Roosevelt in 1907, the fourth generation of his family to choose the Navy as his career. While a midshipman, he won national distinction as an expert rifle and pistol shot, and his name was engraved on the cup presented annually by the General Society, Sons of the Revolution, to the midshipman most proficient in practical ordnance and gunnery.

Graduating in June 1911, he served afloat as a "passed midshipman," then required by law, until March 7, 1912, when he was commissioned Ensign. He subsequently progressed in grade until his promotion to Rear Admiral to date from April 24, 1942. He was designated Vice Admiral by the President of the United States on December 13, 1945, which rank he retained, except during a brief period of shore duty, until his retirement on July 1, 1952, when he was advanced to the rank of Admiral on the basis of combat awards. Shortly after graduation from the Naval Academy, while attached to the battleship UTAH, he participated in the landings at Veracruz, Mexico in April 1914, and was awarded the Medal of Honor for conspicuous conduct in battle, leading his men with skill and courage.

After service aboard the UTAH, PARKER, MAINE, and the newly commissioned ARIZONA, he was assigned in December 1917 for duty with the destroyer force in European waters during World War I. After brief service in the USS ALLEN, he joined the USS PORTER and, for his service in that destroyer during the attack on a German submarine, received a commendatory letter from the Force Commander and the British Admiralty noting, "the excellent manner in which said ship carried out her attack against the enemy submarine, with promptness showing a commendable organization and spirit existing aboard the PORTER. The saving of Allied tonnage and effect on morale by putting this submarine, at least temporarily, out of commission, can hardly be overestimated in its importance."

On June 24, 1918, he assumed command of the USS SULTANA, and from August 1 to October 27, 1918, he commanded the USS WORDEN which also involved the tactical command of a group of three American and three French destroyers engaged in anti-submarine warfare in European waters. He was awarded the Navy Cross and cited "for distinguished service" for these activities while engaged "in the important, exacting and hazardous duty 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..."

Returning to the United States after the Armistice, he was assigned a brief shore duty as Assistant Naval Inspector of Ordnance in the Philadelphia area, until March 1921 when he assumed command of the destroyer PRUITT, a unit of the United States Atlantic Fleet. In June 1922 he was transferred to duty as gunnery officer on the staff of Commander Destroyer Squadron 15, when that squadron was ordered to the Asiatic station. On arrival of the squadron in Asia in August 1922, he became Aide, Fleet Gunnery and Fleet Personnel Officer on the staff of the Commander in Chief United States Asiatic Fleet, USS HURON, flagship. While serving in this duty as gunnery officer of this advanced fleet operating in proximity to a then somewhat hostile and threatening Japanese attitude, he began a period of personal activity which, in the subsequent years, resulted in the development of new and modern devices designed to greatly increase the accuracy and fire-power of naval weapons. Late in 1923, while serving in this capacity, he was assigned by the Commander in Chief Asiatic Fleet as the officer in charge of the important assistance and relief aid that the fleet gave to the Japanese on the occasion of the destruction of Yokohama and large part of Tokyo by the catastrophic earthquake and fire which devastated those areas, and resulted in several hundred thousand casualties.

In November 1923, Admiral Badger was returned to the United States and assigned to the Fire Control Section, Bureau of Ordnance, Navy Department. At this time, the vulnerability of Naval Surface Vessels to attack from aircraft was under close scrutiny, and the Navy set out to overcome this military weakness. Admiral Badger was assigned the latter task as his primary mission. Under these directives, the first fully automatic electronic systems for the control of gun fire from the decks of ships for protection from attacking aircraft were initiated and became available for installation aboard ship. As a dual accomplishment, most of the principles and mechanisms involved found direct application to the production of a modern bombsight and its ability to meet advanced speeds and the tactical requirements of aircraft. The records of these developments give to Admiral Badger much credit for his guidance of industry and science toward accomplishment of results hitherto considered impossible in the fields of electronics and mechanical design. These and other efforts, won him recognition in 1925 in connection with the development of aviation as coordinate to naval warfare.

In November 1925 he was assigned to the USS MARYLAND and served as First Lieutenant and Gunnery Officer of this ship from June 1926 to July 1928. This assignment was primarily occasioned by the fact that the first fully automatic system of fire control which Admiral Badger had been most active in developing, was assigned to that vessel. The system met with outstanding success against aircraft and surface targets, and the

principles and methods involved proved revolutionary in their positive effect on the control of all naval missiles.

He returned to the Bureau of Ordnance in August 1928 as the Head of the Fire Control Section and as a member of a Special Board on Naval Ordnance. In May 1931, he assumed command of the destroyer SOUTHARD, where he assumed tactical command of an experimental group of destroyers, mine layers and submarines for the purpose of developing technological means and tactical plans for the underwater detection and destruction of submarines. In June 1932, this task was successfully completed to the degree that all destroyers and patrol vessels of the Navy were soon equipped with devices enabling them to locate, and execute precise attacks against, submerged submarines. In June 1932, Admiral Badger began a year's service as Executive Officer of the destroyer tender MELVILLE.

For the next three years, he served at the Naval Academy, Executive Department, and when detached in May 1936, served a two year tour as Executive Officer of the USS INDIANAPOLIS. Reporting to the Naval War College, Newport, Rhode Island, he completed the Senior Course in May 1939, and was then ordered to the Navy Department where he served as Secretary of the General Board until December 1940. During this period Admiral Badger, with the full support of the General Board, successfully promoted naval policies requiring greatly increased fire-power (in ratios as high as six to one) in all defensive aircraft assigned to the fleet.

In December 1940, he became Chief of Staff and Aide to Admiral E. J. King, Commander Patrol Force, U. S. Fleet, continuing on that duty after February 1941, when Admiral King was redesignated as Commander in Chief, U. S. Atlantic Fleet. On completion of the reorganization and war plans of this fleet, Admiral Badger was assigned, in October 1941, to command the NORTH CAROLINA, the first of the fast battleships. He initiated the arming of this vessel with a multi-gunned battery of heavy machine and rapid fire guns, increasing the anti-aircraft fire power many-fold. The success of this battery occasioned the adoption of this form of armament for naval vessels of all types and materially increased their security against air attack.

In September 1942, he was promoted to the rank of Rear Admiral and was assigned as Commander Destroyers, Atlantic Fleet, with additional duty as Commander, Destroyer Flotillas 3, 4, and 8. This command developed into one of about 1500 destroyers and patrol vessels engaged in anti-submarine campaigns when the German menace was at full strength.

In December 1942, he was called to Washington by Admiral King and assigned as Assistant Chief of Naval Operations for Logistics Plans, a new organization. In addition, he was

assigned to head-up the Logistic Plans Division of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, also a new organization, and in this capacity Admiral Badger became the Senior Logistics Advisor to the Allied Chiefs of Staff, serving as such at the Quebec and Cairo Conferences. He was awarded the Legion of Merit for this service and the citation states, "exercising brilliant organizing and planning skill and outstanding executive ability, Admiral Badger rendered invaluable assistance... His clear understanding of logistics problems and his diplomatic and forceful leadership throughout this extremely critical period contributed materially to the progressive success of the war effort."

In February 1944, he was returned to sea duty as Commander Service Squadrons, South Pacific Force, serving until the following September in that command. He was awarded the Gold Star in lieu of the second Legion of Merit, the citation stating in part: "During this period (he) displayed exceptional ability and exercised sound judgment in handling the many problems of logistics and fleet service in the area. His constant attention to the maintenance of our surface forces and advanced naval bases, contributed materially to the success of our offensive operations against the enemy in the Solomon Islands and Bismarck Archipelago area, and the support of our fleet in successful operations in the Marianas and Palau Island campaigns..."

On October 6, 1944, he was designated Commander, Battleship Division 7, and while serving in this administrative command, assumed tactical command of several heavy task units of the Third and Fifth Fleets. In January 1945, he commanded a battleship-cruiser-destroyer force which, supported by naval aircraft and in close coordination with a force of B-29's, attacked Iwo Jima. Later as the tactical Commander of fleet units of appropriate strength and characteristic, he participated in the occupation of Okinawa, and in strikes against the Japanese home islands of Kyushu, Shikoku, Honshu, and Hokkaido. As Commander of Task Force 31, he occupied the Yokosuka area in Tokyo Bay, on August 30, 1945, following the capitulation of Japan, and established the security of Tokyo Bay for further entry of our fleet into that area. He was awarded two additional Gold Stars in lieu of the third and fourth Legions of Merit, each with combat distinguishing device. The citations are quoted in part: "...for exceptionally meritorious conduct...as Commander of a task unit of the Third Fleet during operations against enemy Japanese forces on the Japanese homeland on July 15 and 17, 1945. Serving with distinction in an assignment of vital importance (he) skillfully directed the forces under his command in carrying out well executed bombardments against the enemy on Hokkaido and Honshu and, by his professional skill and initiative contributed to the infliction of extensive damage on hostile industrial targets without casualties to our ships..."

The Gold Star in lieu of the fourth Legion of Merit: "... As Commander of Task Force 31, attached to the Third Fleet in occupation of Yokosuka area of Tokyo Bay from August 12 to 30, 1945, served with distinction in an assignment of vital importance (he) solved many intricate problems that characterized this unusual operation, and taking decisive action to meet the situation in the short time available for preparation, directed the occupation and demilitarization of naval bases and adjacent territory."

Following his return to the United States in command of a large force of the Fleet returning to Northwestern ports, he was in November 1945, designated as Commander Battleship Squadron 2, and Commander Battleship Division 1. The following month, the President of the United States designated him Commander, Service Forces, U. S. Pacific Fleet, with the rank of Vice Admiral, effective upon assuming the duty. In that command, which included the entire Pacific Ocean Area, he was responsible for two of the major tasks then confronting the Navy; the transportation of Army, Marine, Navy, and Coast Guard veterans back to the United States, and the salvage and "roll-up" of naval installations in the Pacific. Also, during this period he planned and provided important services for the Atomic Tests at Bikini. Included in his command at this time was the Navy's famed passenger shuttle service, the "Magic Carpet" fleet of 355 combatant ships and naval transports.

From April 1947, he served for eleven months in the rank of Rear Admiral, as Commandant, Eleventh Naval District. On February 24, 1948, again in the rank of Vice Admiral, he became the Commander Naval Forces, Western Pacific. Under a later re-organization, he assumed direct command of the Seventh Task Fleet. As the Senior Naval and Military officer in that area, he served as the direct representative of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and was responsible for U. S. Naval and Military participation in the many and diversified activities in the China area. These responsibilities included the protection of American citizens and interests in that part of the world, and involved the later evacuation and safeguarding of several thousand individuals, which task was performed without loss of life. Because of his widespread activities and close contact with Chinese officials in all parts of the Mainland, he developed an expert knowledge of the overall China situation. As a result, late in 1949, he was called back to the Navy Department as a consultant and technical advisor to several Departments of the Government regarding Far Eastern matters.

On May 1, 1950, he assumed command of the Eastern Sea Frontier, headquarters in New York, N. Y., with additional duty as Commander, Atlantic Reserve Fleet. On April 15, 1951, he was given further additional duty as Naval Representative of the

Joint Chiefs and Staff to the Security Council, United Nations, in New York City. Later he was also assigned command of NATO Forces, in the American Defense Area.

He was so serving when he reached the legal age of retirement, 53 years and, with the rank of Admiral, (based on Combat Awards) he was transferred to the Temporary Retired List, pending physical clearance, and later to the Retired List of the Navy.

In addition to the Medal of Honor, the Navy Cross, and the Legion of Merit (four awards, two with combat "V"), Admiral Badger has the Mexican Service Medal (USS UTAH); the Victory Medal Destroyer Clasp; American Defense Service Medal, Fleet Clasp; American Campaign Medal; Asiatic-Pacific Campaign Medal; European-African-Middle East Campaign Medal; World War II Victory Medal; the China Service Medal; and the Philippine Liberation Ribbon with two Bronze Stars. He also has the Order of the British Empire (honorary commander) awarded by the government of Great Britain.

Upon retirement, Admiral Badger became associated, and still serves in various capacities, with several civilian industrial and business concerns, notably as a consultant to the Sperry Corporation and to the Sperry Rand Corporation, and as a Director of the Prudential Life Insurance Company. In the field of Public Service he served as a Commissioner of Civil Defense, City of New York; as chairman of the Defense Fund, U.S.O.; and as a member of the Crime Commission. He is active in various charitable organizations and patriotic societies of National and State character.