

REAR ADMIRAL JOHN M. ALFORD, UNITED STATES NAVY, RETIRED

John Morris Alford was born in Galva, Illinois, on April 13, 1915, son of Dr. John Merlin Alford and Mrs. (Shirley Foote) Alford. He attended public schools in Galva and Marion Military Institute, Marion, Alabama, before his appointment to the U. S. Naval Academy, Annapolis, Maryland, from his native state in 1932. As a Midshipman he was a member of the Lucky Bag Staff and Midshipman Regimental Commander in 1936. Graduated and commissioned Ensign on June 4, 1936, he subsequently attained the rank of Rear Admiral, to date from October 1, 1963.

After graduation in 1936, he was first assigned to the USS LEXINGTON, operating with Carrier Division ONE, Battle Force, in which he served two years as a junior officer. For a year thereafter he had communication duties on the Staff of Commander Battle Force, in the USS CALIFORNIA. In 1939 he joined the USS TENNESSEE of Battleship Division TWO, Battle Force, for duty in the Gunnery Department, and in 1940 became Air Defense Officer of that battleship. He was on duty in that capacity, his ship at Pearl Harbor, when the Japanese attacked "Battleship Row" on December 7, 1941.

For a few months in 1942 he served as Aide and Flag Lieutenant to Commander Battleship Division TWO in the USS TENNESSEE, and later that year was transferred to the USS ALABAMA (commissioned in August 1942) for duty in the Gunnery Department. He served as Gunnery Officer of that battleship from April 1944 to the end of hostilities. During that period, the ALABAMA participated in the Gilbert Islands Operation; Raids on Truk, the Marianas Operation; the Okinawa Operation; and the Occupation of Japan.

He was awarded the Bronze Star Medal with Combat "V," "For heroic service as Gunnery Officer of the USS ALABAMA, in action against important enemy Japanese industrial installations in Hitachi, Honshu, Japan, on the night of July 17-18, 1945. Maintaining the Gunnery Department of his ship at a high level of efficiency and readiness, Commander Alford contributed materially to the heavy damage inflicted on enemy installations during the bombardment despite exceedingly adverse conditions..."

In August 1945 he had orders to additional temporary duty as Executive Officer of the THIRD Fleet Landing Force which went ashore at the Yokosuka Naval Base on August 30, to assist in preparing that base for American Navy Occupation. He was detached from the ALABAMA in November 1945 for his first tour of shore duty since graduation from the Naval Academy.

After serving from December 1945 to October 1947 in the Bureau of Naval Personnel (Research Division), Navy Department, Washington, D. C., he was ordered to command the USS JAMES E. KYES. He assumed command of that destroyer in January 1948, and continued as her Commanding Officer

until July 1949. In October of that year he joined the Staff of Commander SIXTH Fleet, and served as Fleet Gunnery and Training Officer, until July 1951.

He was next a student at the Armed Forces Staff College, Norfolk, Virginia, completing the course in February 1952, he then reported for duty in the International Affairs Division (now the Politico-Military Policy Division), Office of the Chief of Naval Operations. In 1954-1955 he commanded Destroyer Division ONE HUNDRED TWENTY TWO, and on September 15, 1955 was transferred to duty as Chief of Staff and Aide to Commander Destroyer Flotilla TWO.

After another tour of duty (1957-1959) in the Office of the Chief of Naval Operations, he attended the National War College, Washington, D. C. Following graduation in June 1961, he next commanded Destroyer Squadron FIFTEEN. On September 21, 1962 he became Commander U. S. Naval Forces, Korea and on April 13, 1964 reported as Assistant Chief of Naval Personnel for Plans, Bureau of Naval Personnel, Navy Department. In January 1965 he was transferred to the Office of the Secretary of Navy, Navy Department, where he served as Task Force Director, Navy Personnel Retention Policy Board. In March 1966 he reported as Chairman of the Education and Training Activities Study Group, Bureau of Naval Personnel and in May of that year assumed command of Cruiser Destroyer Flotilla TWO.

In July 1967 he became Deputy Commander of the Military Sea Transportation Service and Chief of Staff to the Commander of the Military Sea Transportation Service, with headquarters in Washington, D. C. On July 1, 1969 he was transferred to the Retired List of the U. S. Navy. He was awarded the Legion of Merit for the development of "mutual understanding" between leaders of the maritime industry and MSTS.

In addition to the Legion of Merit and the Bronze Star Medal with Combat "V," Rear Admiral Alford has the American Defense Service Medal, with star; American Campaign Medal; Asiatic-Pacific Campaign Medal, with two silver stars (ten operations); European-African-Middle Eastern Campaign Medal; World War II Victory Medal; Navy Occupation Service Medal, Europe and Asia Clasps; National Defense Service Medal with bronze star; and the Philippine Liberation Ribbon. He also has the Philippine Republic Presidential Unit Citation Badge.