

Public Information Division
U. S. Coast Guard
Washington, D. C.

Biographical Sketch

REAR ADMIRAL JAMES A. ALGER, JR.
U. S. COAST GUARD

James Albert Alger, Jr. was born on July 9, 1910, at Brookline, Mass., the son of James Albert and Marjorie Hill Alger. His father retired from the U. S. Coast Guard as a Rear Admiral on March 1, 1943.

James, Jr. entered the U. S. Coast Guard with a commission as Ensign on July 13, 1931, after graduating from Virginia Polytechnic Institute, Blacksburg, Va., with a B.S. Degree in Electrical Engineering.

EARLY ASSIGNMENTS

He served his first assignment as assistant engineer on board the Coast Guard Cutter SARANAC in the Gulf division. That was followed by engineering duty assignments on board the Destroyers UPSHUR and McDOUGAL of the New York division of the former Destroyer Force operated by the Coast Guard in an all-out suppression of smuggling (1924-1934). After serving six months as assistant engineer of the Cutter MENDOTA, based at Norfolk, Va., he returned to New York in December 1933 to become engineer officer of the Destroyer HUNT.

He served as engineer on board the Cutter ALGONQUIN out of Woods Hole, Mass., from July 1934 to July 1935, then spent nearly two years with the Cutter CHELAN in the North Pacific and Alaskan waters. Following a brief tour of duty on board the Cutter CAYUGA of Boston, Mass., he reported for duty in the office of the Chief Engineer at Coast Guard Headquarters at Washington, D. C., in July 1938.

WORLD WAR II

During World War II, he commanded the Cutter DIONE on anti-submarine patrol in the Atlantic from February 1942 to April 1943, then commanded the Cutter GRESHAM out of New York for a brief period. He also commanded two Coast Guard-manned destroyers on convoy escort duty with the Atlantic Fleet--the USS MOSLEY (DE-321) from September 1943 to May 1944, and the USS LOWE (DE-325) until October 1944. For these services he received the Navy Commendation Ribbon with Metal Pendant.

He served the remainder of the war as engineer at the Coast Guard Yard, Curtis Bay, Md., and remained there after the war serving as Planning Officer from September 1947 to December 1948.

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During the first half of 1949, he commanded a pre-commissioning detail connected with the conversion of a group of 311-ft. Navy seaplane tenders acquired by the Coast Guard for ocean station weather patrol duty. He then commanded the Cutter CHINCOTEAGUE of that group for a year in the Atlantic out of Norfolk, Va.

RADM Alger served as Chief, Budget Division at Coast Guard Headquarters, Washington, D. C., from May 1950 to September 1953, followed by another tour of duty as Planning Officer at the Coast Guard Yard until February 1956. While there he attained the rank of Captain.

After commanding the 327-ft. Cutter TANEY in the Pacific for more than a year, he reported to the Coast Guard Academy, New London, Conn., in June 1957 to serve as Engineering Maintenance Officer and Commanding Officer of the Ealisted Personnel. On July 1, 1959, he was named Assistant Superintendent of the Academy.

Following his nomination as flag officer by the President on February 3, 1961, and the approval of the Senate to rank as permanent Rear Admiral from July 1, 1961, RADM Alger became Chief, Office of Engineering at Coast Guard Headquarters. He became Chief of Staff of the U. S. Coast Guard on June 20, 1962.

In June 1964, he assumed command of the First Coast Guard District, Boston. In June 1966, he became Commander, Eastern Area, and Commander, Third Coast Guard District, New York. Retired from this post July 1, 1967.

In addition to the Navy Commendation Medal, RADM Alger has the following World War II campaign service ribbons and medals: American Defense; American Area; European-African-Middle Eastern Area (one star); and the World War II Victory Medal. He also has the National Defense Service Medal, Korean War.

Following is a resume of appointments in rank: Ensign, July 13, 1931; Lieutenant (jg), May 16, 1935; Lieutenant, July 1, 1939; Lieut. Commander, October 2, 1942; Commander, June 6, 1945; Captain, November 1, 1955; Rear Admiral, July 1, 1961.

RADM Alger is married to the former Julia Isbell of Nashville, Tenn.