

Public Information Division
U. S. Coast Guard
Washington, D. C. 20226

Biographical Sketch

REAR ADMIRAL ROGER C. HEIMER,
U. S. COAST GUARD, RETIRED

Roger Clarence Heimer was born in New Oxford, Penna., on December 5, 1896, the son of Peter E. and Elizabeth Achenbach Heimer. He attended public schools in York, Penna., and was graduated from high school in Maush Chunk, Pa., in 1912. During the school year of 1912-13, he was enrolled at Mercersburg Academy. Winning one of two four-year Maryland engineering scholarships to Johns Hopkins University, he attended that institution from 1913 to 1915.

He entered the U. S. Coast Guard Academy in August 1915, but resigned in February 1917. After attending Gettysburg College during the first semester of his senior year, class of 1918, he left to re-enter the Coast Guard Academy and was commissioned an Ensign on October 1, 1918.

During the ensuing six years of sea duty he served on board the Coast Guard Cutters TALLAPOOSA, COMANCHE, TUSCARORA, KANKAKEE, APACHE, SEMINOLE and PEQUOT. In late summer of 1924, he was assigned as engineer officer of the Destroyer CUMMINGS, one of the fleet of destroyers the Coast Guard began acquiring at that time from the Navy to use in an all-out suppression of smuggling along the Atlantic seaboard. In May 1927, he became Executive Officer of the Destroyer TUCKER, and the following September took command of the Destroyer FANNING. Later, he commanded the Destroyer DOWNES.

Early in 1929, he became Executive Officer of the Cutter CHAMPLAIN. During the following two years, he first commanded the Destroyer PORTER, and then Section Base 3. He next served as Commander, Division 8, Off-Shore Patrol Force, Pascagoula, Miss., from November 1931 until October 1934. He then commanded the Cutter TAHOMA in the Great Lakes until September 1937, and the Cutter ITASCA in the Pacific until July 1940. During the latter command, he served on the Bering Sea Patrol and made a goodwill cruise to South American countries.

While stationed the next two years at Cincinnati, Ohio, as Coast Guard Representative of the entire Ohio River Valley, he also became Captain of the Port of Cincinnati. He was active in organizing Coast Guard Auxiliary units from Pittsburgh, Pa., to Cairo, Ill., and also in the Tennessee Valley during that period.

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At the outset of World War II, in March 1942, he was assigned to pre-commissioning detail on the assault troop transport USS SAMUEL CHASE and took command when she was ready for combat duty. During the eighteen months he commanded the Coast Guard-manned CHASE, the flagship of the 8th Amphibious Force, she went unscathed and put troops ashore without losses or injuries in the invasions of Algiers, Sicily, and Salerno. Because of that record, the transport became known as the "Lucky CHASE," a name first bestowed upon her by the Army during the November 1942 invasion east of Algiers, when the CHASE was narrowly missed by seven torpedoes and a hail of bombs from the air and was the only transport to come out/Algiers safely that day.

Captain Heimer received the BRONZE STAR MEDAL for meritorious service in the invasion of Algiers. He received the LEGION OF MERIT for outstanding service in the assault on Sicily in July 1943, and a GOLD STAR in lieu of a SECOND LEGION OF MERIT for landing troops and equipment on the heavily defended beaches of Italy.

In January 1944, he was assigned as District Coast Guard Officer, St. Louis, Mo. From April to September of 1945, he commanded the troop transport USS ADMIRAL H. T. MAYO (AP-125) on trips to France and the Pacific to bring home troops.

He served his last tour of duty at the 12th Coast Guard District office in San Francisco, being relieved from duty because of physical disability in February 1946. He was retired with the rank of Rear Admiral, effective July 1, 1946.

Resume of appointments in rank: Ensign, October 1, 1918; Lieutenant (jg), February 12, 1920; Lieutenant, January 12, 1923; Lieut. Commander, October 1, 1926; Commander, May 25, 1939; Captain, June 15, 1942; Rear Admiral (Retired), July 1, 1946.

RADM Heimer has been a member of the Rotary International since 1931. He is a member of the American Legion, and was the first Post Commander of City Post No. 386 in Cleveland, Ohio.

RADM Heimer married the former Harriet M. Kolloge at New York in 1924. They presently are living at 111 Debaran Lane, Rosemont, Pa.