

Public Information Division  
U. S. Coast Guard  
Washington 25, D. C.

Biographical Sketch

REAR ADMIRAL JOHN LUTHER STEINMETZ, USCG (RET)

John Luther Steinmetz was born at Chase, Maryland, on November 16, 1904, the son of John Steinmetz and Emma Behringer Steinmetz of Baltimore. He was educated in public schools of Baltimore and at McDonogh School, McDonogh, Md., and the Army-Navy Preparatory School in Baltimore.

He entered the U. S. Coast Guard Academy at New London, Conn., as a cadet in April 1924, and was graduated and commissioned an Ensign on March 8, 1927. Subsequently he advanced to Lieutenant (jg), March 8, 1929; Lieutenant, March 8, 1931; Lieutenant Commander, August 5, 1939; Commander, December 1, 1942; Captain, March 20, 1945; Rear Admiral (Ret) July 20, 1960.

He served his first assignment aboard the destroyer BURROWS (of the old destroyer force the Coast Guard operated between 1924 and 1934 to suppress smuggling) on the rum patrol out of Boston from March to November 1927. After a tour of duty with the Cutter YAMACRAW on patrol out of Savannah, Ga., he served on anti-smuggling patrol with the destroyers ROE, TRIPPE, and PATTERSON, and the Cutter SENECA, respectively, of the New York Division between September 1928 and June 1930.

During the next two years he was stationed at Coast Guard Headquarters in Washington, D. C., as assistant intelligence officer. From June 1932 to April 1935, he was navigator aboard the Cutter SHOSHONE, serving in Pacific-Alaskan waters. He made the 1933-34 Bering Sea Patrols with the cutter.

Transferred to the Coast Guard Academy, he served as instructor in Mathematics, Mechanics, Navigation and Surveying until September 1939. While stationed there he completed post-graduate courses in Mathematics and Mechanics at Cornell University in the summer of 1935, and at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in the summer of 1936. He also made the cadet practice cruise aboard the Cutter CAMPBELL in the summer of 1937. Detached from the Academy he commanded the Cutter THETIS, stationed at Boston, on neutrality patrol and search and rescue.

World War II:

Assigned next as executive officer of the Cutter DUANE at Boston, he served on North Atlantic weather patrol with the cutter from February 1941 until the outbreak of World War II when the DUANE as a combat cutter was ordered to Iceland for convoy escort duty on the so-called "Iceland Shuttle". In August 1942 he became commanding officer of the Coast Guard Training Station at Fort McHenry in Baltimore, where his duties included the training of personnel in fire fighting, chemical warfare and fire prevention. As a seagoing officer, however, he was keenly interested in shipboard damage control and under his direction the Coast Guard's first Damage Control School was instituted at this base.

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After completing two months of refresher courses at the Submarine Chaser Training Center in Miami, and at the Training Station in St. Augustine, Fla., in November 1943, he was assigned to the Pacific war zone as commander of Patrol Frigate Division 29. His flagship was the USS EL PASO (PF-41). While serving there until February 1945, his division performed convoy escort duties, maintained supply, and fired many successful missions on Japanese-held positions from New Guinea into the Philippines. Captain Steinmetz was awarded the Bronze Star Medal for meritorious operations against the enemy.

From February to August 1945, the end of war, he served in the North Atlantic in command first of the Escort Division 22 from aboard the destroyer USS POOLE (DE-151), then the Escort Division 68 from aboard the patrol frigate USS GLADWYNE (PF-62).

POST-WAR:

He then commanded until April 1946, Personnel Separation Center No. 11 at Long Beach, Calif., when demobilization of the Coast Guard was speedily underway.

Transferred to the 11th Coast Guard District office at Long Beach, he served as Director of the Coast Guard Auxiliary, having collateral duties as recruiting officer in 1947, and of Acting Chief of Staff in 1948-49.

From August 1949 to June 1950, he attended the National War College in Washington, D. C., then was assigned as Chief, Reserve Division at Coast Guard Headquarters. In August 1952, he became Chief of Operations, First Coast Guard District, Boston. From May 1955 to August 1956, he was stationed at Juneau, Alaska, as Chief of Staff, 17th Coast Guard District. He then assumed command of the Coast Guard Receiving Center at Cape May, N. J. On November 1, 1959, Captain Steinmetz was retired from active service in the Coast Guard, but was immediately recalled to active duty to continue in the aspect of Coast Guard Receiving Center commanding officer. Effective July 20, 1960, Captain Steinmetz was released to inactive duty, and assumed the flag rank of Rear Admiral, in retirement.

In addition to the Bronze Star, Captain Steinmetz's World War II campaign service medals and ribbons include the American Defense with sea clasp, American Campaign, European-African-Middle Eastern Campaign, Asiatic-Pacific, Philippine Liberation and World War II Victory.

Married to the former Margaret Peterson of Fairhaven, Mass., Captain Steinmetz has a son, John L. Steinmetz, a Lieutenant in the Coast Guard, and a daughter Valerie.

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