

Public Information Division
U. S. Coast Guard Headquarters
Washington, D. C., 20590

Biographical Sketch

REAR ADMIRAL JOHN F. THOMPSON, JR.
U. S. COAST GUARD

John Fawdrey Thompson, Jr., was born on May 30, 1919, at Franklin, N. Y., and graduated from Tilton Prep School, Tilton, N. H., in 1937, following which he attended freshman year at Syracuse University, N. Y.

Entering the U. S. Coast Guard Academy, New London, Conn., with an appointment as cadet on August 5, 1938, he was graduated with a B. S. Degree and with a commission of Ensign on December 19, 1941, a few days after the bombing of Pearl Harbor. Because of the war emergency graduation was hastened six months ahead of the usual four years required for cadet training and study.

Ordered immediately to combat duty, he served his first assignment during World War II as Deck Watch Officer on board the Coast Guard Cutter CAMPBELL on Atlantic convoy escort duty until August 1942. He next commanded Sub-Chaser 705 on the war-time Greenland Patrol, and served as Anti-Submarine Warfare Officer and Instructor on the staff of Commander, Task Force 24 at Argentia, Nfld., until September 1943. The following six months saw him as Attack Instructor at the Coast Guard Advanced Officers Training School, St. Augustine, Fla. During the remainder of the war he served first as Executive Officer and then as Commanding Officer of the Coast Guard-manned destroyer escort USS HARVESON (DE-316) on convoy escort duty both in the Atlantic and in the Pacific. At age 24, the youngest commanding officer of a destroyer escort, he was credited with sinking a German U-boat with some assistance from a British aircraft. For commanding the HARVESON, he was awarded the NAVY COMMENDATION MEDAL.

From October 1945 to January 1946, he commanded the destroyer escort USS JOYCE (DE-317) in the Atlantic. He served the next three years as Administrative Aide to the Chief, Office of Merchant Marine Safety at Coast Guard Headquarters, Washington, D. C. From October 1948 to October 1949, he was assigned to marine industry training at the Esso Company in New York. That was followed by one year of duty at the Coast Guard Marine Inspection Office, New York, as Deck and Machinery Inspector.

From October 1950 to October 1952, he served first as Executive Officer and then as Commanding Officer of the Cutter MENDOTA on search and rescue and ocean station patrol out of Wilmington, N. C. He then returned to his former duties at the Marine Inspection Office in New York where he remained one year. From October 1953 to July 1958, he served as Deck and Machinery Inspector and as Senior Investigating Officer at the Marine Inspection Office at Jacksonville, Fla. He next commanded the Cutter CHEROKEE (WATF-165) out of Norfolk, Va., for more than two years.

(more)

From October 1960 to August 1963, he served as Officer in Charge of the Coast Guard Merchant Marine Detail at Yokohama, Japan. While stationed the following four years at the Marine Inspection Office in Philadelphia, Pa., he served as Senior Inspector (Materiel) and Executive Officer the first year and then as Officer in Charge of that office for the remainder of that tour of duty.

In July 1967, the then CAPT Thompson was transferred to the 7th Coast Guard District, Miami, where he served first as Chief, Operations Division until July 1968, and then as the District Chief of Staff until June 1970.

By nomination of the President on January 25, 1970, and confirmation of the Senate, he was appointed two-star flag officer to rank as permanent Rear Admiral from July 1, 1970. At that time he assumed the post of the Superintendent of the U. S. Coast Guard Academy (relieving retiring RADM Arthur B. Engel, USCG).

In August 1973, he returned to Headquarters to assume the post of Chief, Office of Boating Safety, his present station.

Following is a resume of RADM Thompson's dates of rank: Ensign, December 19, 1941; Lieutenant (jg), October 1, 1942; Lieutenant, May 15, 1943; Lieut. Commander, October 3, 1945; Commander, May 1, 1956; Captain, June 23, 1963; Rear Admiral, July 1, 1970.

In addition to the Navy Commendation Medal, RADM Thompson has the following World War II campaign service medals and ribbons: American Defense; American Area; European-African-Middle Eastern Area; Asiatic-Pacific; and World War II Victory.

RADM Thompson has held memberships in the National Defense Transportation Association and the Propeller Club of the United States. In 1961 and 1962 he served as President of the Port of Yokohama, Japan, branch of the Propeller Club.

He has remained a sports enthusiast since his youth and since 1941 when he was selected Small College Football All-American, All-New England Halfback, and All-Connecticut Halfback. He has won several handball and tennis championships in Navy and civilian competitions, including the Far East Singles and Doubles Championships for 1961 and 1962, and the All Navy Doubles Tennis Championships for 1959 and 1964.

RADM Thompson's wife is the former Marjorie A. Dunton of Boothbay, Me. They have three children, Dan (born May 20, 1957); Sheri Ann (October 23, 1958); and Mark (June 10, 1961). RADM Thompson has two sons by a previous marriage,