

REAR ADMIRAL CHARLES TIGHE

U. S. COAST GUARD

Charles Tighe was born on December 21, 1911, at Groton, Connecticut, and was graduated from Bulkeley High School, New London, Connecticut.

He entered the U. S. Coast Guard Academy, New London, Connecticut, with an appointment as cadet on August 11, 1931. During his four years as a cadet, he was a member of the football and of the boxing varsity teams, acting as co-captain and then as captain of the latter. He was a member of the Inter-class Crew and the Monogram Club. He served as class president for one year, and as a battalion commander during his first class year.

After graduating from the Academy with a B. S. Degree and a commission as Ensign on May 27, 1935, he was stationed on the west coast where he served on board several Coast Guard cutters. These were the USCGC TAHOE, based at Oakland, the USCGC AURORA, and the USCGC HERMES at San Pedro.

BECOMES AVIATOR

In June 1938, he entered flight training at the Naval Air Station, Pensacola, Florida, and was designated Coast Guard Aviator No. 63 on July 1, 1939. He performed his first flight assignment from the Coast Guard Air Station, San Diego, California. In October, 1939, he was transferred to the Coast Guard Air Station at Brooklyn, New York.

WORLD WAR II

From February 1941 to April 1944, during World War II, he served as chief flight instructor in Patrol planes and as maintenance officer at the Naval Air Station in Pensacola. Beginning in October 1943 of that period, he was also Commander of Training Squadron Eight Able and Senior Seaplane Squadron Commander. He was pilot of the first plane to engage an enemy submarine attacking American shipping in the Gulf of Mexico between the Mississippi Delta and Tampa.

He became Executive Officer of the Coast Guard Air Station, San Francisco, in April 1944. That assignment carried the additional duties of Deputy Commander of an Air-Sea Rescue Task Unit, instructor and training officer, and on occasions Acting Commanding Officer of the station.

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While stationed at Coast Guard Headquarters, Washington, D. C., from June 1945 to April 1947, he performed various tasks in the Office of Operations. These included duties as assistant to the Chief, Planning and Coordinating Division of Air-Sea Rescue, as Chief of the Statistics Section, and as assistant to the Chief of Operations.

During his next tour of duty as Executive Officer of the Coast Guard Air Station, San Diego, Cal., he also was Management Program Officer and Legal Officer there. In April 1950, he took command of the Coast Guard Air Station, Port Angeles, Wash., and also served as Commanding Officer, Coast Guard Group, in that area. In August 1951, he became Chief, Search and Rescue Section, Eighth Coast Guard District, New Orleans, and continued performing flight missions while in that post.

He next commanded the Coast Guard Air Station, Miami, Fla., from August 1952 to September 1955. After that he served as Commanding Officer of the Coast Guard Air Detachment at Kodiak, Alaska, and as Commander, Search and Rescue Sector II, North Pacific, until July 1958. At that time he reported to Coast Guard Headquarters, Washington, D. C., to serve as Staff Assistant to the Chief, Office of Operations until February 1961 when he became Chief, Aviation Division. While serving in the latter capacity he also was a member of the Intergovernmental Maritime Consultative Organization (IMCO) working group on Coordination of Safety at Sea and in the Air. He also was on the executive committee of the Cornell-Gugenheim Aviation Safety Center Foundation.

Released from flight status on June 30, 1963, he transferred to the 11th Coast Guard District, Honolulu, to become Chief of Staff of that district. While there he was nominated by the President on January 13, 1965, for the permanent grade of Rear Admiral and was approved by the Senate to rank as such from March 17, 1965. Following this appointment he assumed the post of Chief, Office of Reserve at Coast Guard Headquarters, Washington, D. C.

In June 1966, he became Commander, 9th Coast Guard District, Cleveland, which covers Coast Guard activities in the Great Lakes region. In July 1968, he became Commander, 11th Coast Guard District, Long Beach, Cal.

RADM Tighe's World War II campaign service medals and ribbons include the American Area, American Defense, and World War II Victory.

Following is a resume of his appointments in rank: Ensign, May 27, 1935; Lieutenant (jg), May 27, 1938; Lieutenant, March 1, 1941; Lieut. Commander, December 1, 1942; Commander, March 1, 1944; Captain, March 1, 1957; Rear Admiral, March 17, 1965.

RADM Tighe's wife is the former Ila Belle Alexander of San Diego, Cal. They have one son, Gary Charles, and one daughter, Lynne, who is Mrs. Paul T. Brunner of 1017 So. Frederick, Arlington, Va. Son Gary lives at Olivia, Minn., where RADM Tighe's sister, Mrs. Helen Rauenhorst, also resides.

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