

From:
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REAR ADMIRAL LOUIS BERNHARDT OLSON, USCG

Rear Admiral Louis B. Olson is a Coast Guard officer of over 30 years' experience, afloat and ashore, on the Atlantic, Pacific, and Gulf Coasts, on the Great Lakes and Hawaii.

Rear Admiral Olson was born on July 21, 1895, at Aspen, Colorado. Graduating from high school, he attended the University of Colorado for three years before his appointment as cadet engineer to the U. S. Coast Guard Academy in January, 1918. He was commissioned ensign in the Coast Guard engineer corps on November 5, 1918. Progressing through the various ranks of the service, he was promoted to Lieutenant (jg), December 18, 1919; Lieutenant, January 12, 1923; Lieutenant Commander, October 1, 1926; Commander, May 25, 1939; Captain, December 10, 1942; and Rear Admiral, March 28, 1949.

Upon graduation, Rear Admiral Olson remained at the Academy for a year as engineering instructor. He then served as an engineering officer on the staff of Commanding Officer, Florida Coast Patrol, and in 1920 and 1921 he was an engineering officer on the Cutter HAIDA based on the West Coast.

From 1923 to 1926 Rear Admiral Olson returned to the Academy as engineering instructor. In late 1926 and 1927 he was the engineering officer of the Cutters BEALE and WAINWRIGHT on the East Coast. In late 1927 he qualified himself for line duty, serving aboard the Cutter YAMACRAW as navigator and executive officer. In 1929 and early 1930 he commanded the Cutter MONAGHAN, then transferred to the staff of Commander, Coast Guard Destroyer Force, Atlantic. From 1932 to 1935 he commanded successively the Cutters GRESHAM, UNALGA, and SENECA. In 1935 and 1936 he commanded the Cutter ESCANABA on the Great Lakes. In 1937 to 1941 he served as Maintenance Officer at the Coast Guard Academy.

In April, 1941, Rear Admiral Olson took command of the Cutter TANEY based in Honolulu, then operating under the Commander, Inshore Patrol Force, 14th Naval District. During the attack on Pearl Harbor, the TANEY along with vessels of the Navy, is credited with laying an anti-aircraft barrage that kept Japanese planes away from the Honolulu power plant. The TANEY under his command escorted the earliest long range convoys into Pacific areas south and west of Honolulu. In October, 1942 he became District Coast Guard Officer for the 14th Naval District, in which capacity he served until August, 1943, when he was called to the Navy Department in Washington. There he was responsible for the development of emergency rescue equipment and aircraft rescue procedures.

In August, 1944, he went to the Coast Guard Academy, as Executive Officer, serving there until June, 1948. From June, 1948 until December 1949 he served as Commander, 11th Coast Guard District (Southern California with district headquarters in Long Beach). After a six months tour of duty in command of the First Coast Guard District with district office at Boston, Massachusetts, he relieved Admiral E. H. Smith in July 1950 as Commander, Eastern Area and Commander, Third Coast Guard District.*

He held this post for six years until his retirement on June 1, 1956.

He married the former Louise Delaney in 1919. They have two daughters, Barbara Ann Olson and Mrs. Mary Louise Jordan.

* During the summer of 1955, Rear Admiral Olson spent two months in Europe attending conferences on international lifesaving and aids to navigation-- in Sweden, Denmark, West Germany, Belgium, Holland, France and Great Britain.

Rear Admiral Olson retired on June 1, 1956.

(He was succeeded by Rear Admiral Henry C. Perkins, USCG)