

REAR ADMIRAL JEHU V. CHASE
UNITED STATES NAVY, DECEASED

Jehu V. Chase was born in Patterson, Louisiana, on January 10, 1869. He entered the U. S. Naval Academy, Annapolis, Maryland, on appointment from the Third District of Louisiana in 1886, and on June 6, 1890, completed the four year prescribed course. He then served the two years at sea, as then required by law, in the USS KEARSARGE which cruised along the Atlantic Coast as far south as Panama and the USS NEWARK operating in Atlantic and West Indies waters, before he was commissioned Ensign, to rank from July 1, 1892. Advancing progressively in rank, he subsequently attained that of Rear Admiral to date from January 1, 1922. During the period September 17, 1930 to September 15, 1931, he served in the temporary rank of Admiral as Commander in Chief, United States Fleet. On February 1, 1933, he was transferred to the Retired List of the U. S. Navy.

As an Ensign, he was sent to the Mare Island (California) Navy Yard, where he had duty in the USS SAN FRANCISCO. In company with the USS BALTIMORE and the USS YORKTOWN, the SAN FRANCISCO proceeded down the west coast of South America to and through the Strait of Magellan to Montevideo. There, he was transferred, in January 1893, to the USS YANTIC, which was employed in the Plata River, and remained there until late in 1895. He served on the Staff at the Naval War College, from January 22, 1896 until October 1897, then joined the USS NEWPORT at Boston, Massachusetts. In December of that year the NEWPORT embarked the original Canal Commission of the United States and a large party of surveyors for Greytown, Nicaragua. The commission, which was headed by Admiral John G. Walker and General Haines, was taken to Colon for the examination and surveying of the Panama route. The NEWPORT was recalled in April 1898, to take part in the Spanish-American War, and was on blockade duty on the northern coast of Cuba and off Havana. After the peace was signed, his ship was taken to Annapolis, Maryland, and decommissioned.

He then had successive duty in the torpedo boat FOOTE, at the New York Navy Yard; the USS LANCASTER, engaged on a training cruise and in gunnery maneuvers; the USS ALLIANCE; and the USS MAYFLOWER, at that time, May 1900, the official yacht of the Governor of Puerto Rico. In April 1901 he returned to the Naval War College, to again serve on the Staff, and in December 1902 was given command of the torpedo boat destroyer WHIPPLE. After three years in command of that vessel, he was ordered to the Naval Torpdo Station, Newport, Rhode Island, where he served as Executive Officer and for a time was in command of that station.

In October 1907 he reported as Navigator on board the battleship KEARSARGE, operating with the Atlantic Fleet, and as such participated in the cruise of the "Great White Fleet" around the World. The fleet

sailed down the east coast to South America, through the Strait, and up the west coast as far north as the Bremerton Navy Yard, thence to New Zealand via Honolulu, Hawaii. Visits were made by the KEARSARGE at Sydney and Melbourne, Australia and also visited ports in China and Japan.

At Manila in November 1908, he was detached from the KEARSARGE and ordered to duty as Flag Secretary to the Commander THIRD Squadron, Pacific Fleet (later designated the Asiatic Fleet). He was detached from that duty in January 1910, returned to San Francisco from Japan, and in February went aboard the USS CALIFORNIA (later renamed the SAN DIEGO), to serve as Aide on the Staff of the Commander in Chief, Pacific Fleet. In November 1910 he assumed command of the monitor TALLIAHASSEE, an experimental ordnance ship operating in the Potomac River and Chesapeake Bay area.

In August 1911 he was appointed Inspector of Ordnance, Whitehead Torpedo Works, Weymouth, England, which had a contract for a large number of torpedoes for the United States. He next served on Asiatic Station, commanding the USS MONTEREY, October 1912 until January 1913, and later the USS CINCINNATI. In August 1914 he became a member of a Special Board on Naval Ordnance at the Navy Department, Washington, D. C.

Returning to sea duty in February 1917, several months prior to the outbreak of World War I, he assumed command of the USS MINNESOTA. He was in command of that battleship when she struck a German mine in September 1918, off the coast of Delaware, while proceeding from Hampton Roads, Virginia to Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. He was awarded the Distinguished Service Medal and cited as follows: "For exceptionally meritorious service in a duty of great responsibility as Commanding Officer of the MINNESOTA and also for the splendid seamanship shown in bringing the MINNESOTA safely into port after being mined, with a hole in her underwater body approximately thirty feet long and extending athwartship from port side of keel to starboard armor shelf and protective deck without loss of life."

In March 1919 he returned to duty as a member of a Special Board on Naval Ordnance and served as President of that board until detached in June 1921. He then assumed command of the USS ARIZONA. In company with the OKLAHOMA and NEVADA, the ARIZONA proceeded, with a special embassy on board, to Callao, Peru. The ARIZONA then proceeded up the west coast and joined the Battle Fleet.

In December 1921, having been selected for flag rank, he became Commander Base Force, Pacific Fleet. When detached in April 1924, he returned to the Navy Department, where he served as a member of the General Board until September of that year, when he reported as Commandant of the Thirteenth Naval District, headquarters, Seattle, Washington, with additional duty as Commandant of the Puget Sound Navy Yard. In September

1926 he was given command of Battleship Division FOUR, Battle Fleet and in July 1928 returned to Washington for duty as a member of the General Board.

On September 17, 1930, with the accompanying rank of Admiral, he reported as Commander in Chief, United States Fleet, hoisting his flag in the USS TEXAS. He relinquished command on September 15, 1931, and returned to Washington, to again serve on the General Board and was Chairman of the board from April 1932 until his retirement in February 1933.

Rear Admiral Chase died in Coronado, California, on May 24, 1937. A destroyer escort, the USS CHASE, named in his honor was launched at the Navy Yard, Portsmouth, Virginia, on April 24, 1943. The USS CHASE was sponsored by his widow, Mrs. Mary Taylor Chase, now deceased.

In addition to the Distinguished Service Medal, Rear Admiral Chase had the Spanish Campaign Medal and the Victory Medal, Atlantic Fleet Clasp (World War I).