

REAR ADMIRAL RICHARD E. HAWES, UNITED STATES NAVY, DECEASED

Richard Ellington Hawes was born in Thomson, Georgia, on February 21, 1894, son of Eliza Wilson and Adela Mason (Heath) Hawes. He attended the University of Georgia for two years and after starring in baseball at Mercer Law School the next year, in 1915 began a career in professional baseball, terminated by World War I naval service.

Enlisting as a Fireman Second Class in the U. S. Navy on June 4, 1917, he was honorably discharged on September 29, 1918, and the next day accepted an appointment as Ensign (Temporary) in the U. S. Naval Reserve Force. On January 31, 1919 he transferred, in that rank, to the Regular Navy. He reverted to Boatswain, from August 5, 1920, was advanced to Chief Boatswain, from January 16, 1923, and on February 18, 1929 was commissioned Ensign by Special Act of Congress in recognition by Special Act of Congress in recognition of services performed in connection with the salvaging of the USS S-51 and USS S-4. He subsequently progressed in rank, attaining that of Captain, to date from March 25, 1945. On December 1, 1952 he was transferred to the Retired List of the U. S. Navy and was advanced to the rank of Rear Admiral on the basis of a combat award.

After receiving his commission in 1918, he had instruction at the U. S. Naval Academy, Annapolis, Maryland, and later on board the USS PENNSYLVANIA. He subsequently had duty afloat in the USS MOBILE, the gunboat SACRAMENTO (1919); the ocean tug SCIOTA (1920-1923); and the mine sweepers CHEWINK (1923-1925) and CURLEW. In March 1926 he joined the USS FALCON and while attached to that vessel assisted in the salvaging of the USS S-51, which sank off Block Island on September 25, 1925, after a collision with the SS CITY OF ROME. The S-51 was raised and towed to New York in July 1926. "For distinguished service in the line of his profession on the occasion of the salvaging of the USS S-51" he was awarded the Navy Cross.

He also assisted in the salvaging of the USS S-4, which sank off Providencetown, Massachusetts, after a collision with the Coast Guard destroyer PAULDING, December 17, 1927. That submarine was raised on March 17, 1928.

He subsequently had duty and submarine instruction at the Submarine Base, New London, Connecticut. During the period June 1930 to February 1933 he served consecutively in the submarines S-29, S-1, and again in the S-29. After instruction at the Deep Sea Diving School, Navy Yard, Washington, D. C., where he qualified as a Master Diver, he was assigned in May 1933, to Submarine Diving Training Tank at the Submarine Base, New London, Connecticut. In April 1935 he assumed command of the USS FALCON and in March 1938 was detached for duty at the Submarine Base, Pearl Harbor, Territory of Hawaii.

In January 1940 he became Commanding Officer of the USS PIGEON and was serving as such when the United States entered World War II. From the first raid on the Navy Yard at Cavite, Philippine Islands, December 10, 1941, until the Asiatic Submarine Force evacuated to Java, December 31, 1941, the PIGEON, under his command, was in the thick of the fight. She was twice awarded the Presidential Unit Citation. The citations follow in part:

Preidential Unit Citation: "For outstanding and courageous performance of duty of the officers and men attached to the USS PIGEON on the occasion of the Japanese aerial attack on the Navy Yard, Cavite, P. I., on December 10, 1941, when that vessel, despite the severe bombing attacks by enemy Japanese aircraft at the time and without the use of regular steering equipment, towed to safety the USS SEADRAGON and assisted generally in clearing the docks of that Navy Yard, then a roaring inferno of naval vessels and yard craft secured thereto."

Second Presidential Unit Citation: "For displaying excellent fighting ability when the personnel of the USS PIGEON on two occasions, during the month of December 1941, shot down several attacking enemy Japanese aircraft; this despite the fact that the primary mission of the ship was the rescue and salvage of submarines."

Rear Admiral Hawes was personally awarded a Gold Star in lieu of the Second Navy Cross and cited as follows: "For distinguished service ... as Commanding Officer of the USS PIGEON on December 10, 1941, during the Japanese enemy aerial attack on the Navy Yard, Cavite, Philippine Islands. Despite the heavy bombing, strafing, detonations of air flak and warheads, and fires in the immediate vicinity, Lieutenant Commander Hawes, lacking the use of regular steering equipment then under overhaul at the Navy Yard, successfully towed the disabled submarine SEADRAGON clear of the dangerous area and by his skillful maneuvering saved both his ship and a submarine for further offensive war service."

He reported in June 1942 for fitting out duty in the the USS CHANTY-CLEER at the Moore Shipbuilding and Dry Dock Company, Oakland, California. He assumed command of that submarine rescue vessel upon her commissioning, November 20, 1942. After a period of shakedown, the vessel departed the Oakland area, arriving at Pearl Harbor in March 1943. She subsequently arrived at Fremantle, Australia in May of that year, after stop overs at Espiritu Santo, New Hebrides; Noumea, New Caledonia and Brisbane, Australia. Operating between Fremantle and Exmouth Gulf, Western Australia, she served the submarine forces, trained divers, tended small craft, repaired anti-torpedo nets, and operated as a salvage vessel, which included the salvage of the SC-751 and the recovery of parts from the wreckage of a crashed RAAF medium bomber. He received a Letter of Commendation, with authorization to wear the Commendation Ribbon, from the Commander SEVENTH Fleet. The citation follows in part:

Letter of Commendation: "For distinguishing himself by excellent service...as Commanding Officer of the USS CHANTICLEER, under the Commander Submarines, SEVENTH Fleet, during the period May 1943 to May 1944. As Commanding Officer of the USS CHANTICLEER, Commander Hawes showed outstanding ability in the direction of his ship in many assignments given her. His ingenuity in effecting ways and means to repair the various submarines assigned to the CHANTICLEER for refit is commendable. CHANTICLEER successfully carried an important and unwieldy cargo of planes through heavy seas, delivering them safely to port. On another occasion, Commander Hawes skillfully maneuvered his ship over to the spot of a crashed plane, moored, and had a diver in the water all within a space of thirty minutes from the time the plane crashed..."

Detached from command of the CHANTICLEER in June 1944, he had fitting out duty in the USS ANTHEDON at the Ingalls Shipbuilding Company, Pascagoula, Mississippi, and assumed command of that submarine tender upon her commissioning, September 15, 1944. He commanded that vessel throughout the remaining period of World War II and until January 1946. "For meritorious service as Commanding Officer of the USS ANTHEDON, serving under the Commander Submarines, SEVENTH Fleet, during the operations against enemy Japanese forces in the Southwest Pacific War area from November 17, 1944 to September 1, 1945..." he was awarded the Bronze Star Medal. The citation further states in part:

"A forceful leader, Captain Hawes exercised professional ability in organizing and indoctrinating the personnel of his ship in the repair and refitting of submarines and, during a period of eight months, supervised his repair crews in refitting thirty-four submarines in addition to effecting emergency and voyage repairs to twelve others. When two badly damaged hostile vessels were salvaged after being sunk for many months, he ably directed his crews in completely overhauling and repairing the enemy ships..."

In February 1946 he was designated Inspector of Navy Recruiting and Induction, Fourth Joint Service Induction Area, with headquarters in Atlanta, Georgia, where he continued to serve until relieved of active duty pending his retirement, effective December 1, 1952. He died in Thomson, Georgia, on December 30, 1968.

In addition to the Navy Cross with Gold Star, the Bronze Star Medal; the Commendation Ribbon and the Presidential Unit Citation Ribbon with two stars; Rear Admiral Hawes had the Victory Medal (World War I); American Defense Service Medal; American Campaign Medal; Asiatic-Pacific Campaign Medal; World War II Victory Medal; National Defense Service Medal; Philippine Defense Ribbon, Philippine Liberation Ribbon and the Philippine Independence Ribbon.

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