

REAR ADMIRAL CLINTON GITHENS DeFONEY
MEDICAL CORPS, U.S. NAVY, RETIRED

Clinton Githens DeFoney was born in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania on December 25, 1887, son of the late Joseph and Caroline Mertz DeFoney. He attended Central High School in Philadelphia and the University of Pennsylvania, receiving a Bachelor of Arts degree from the latter in 1906. Four years later he received the degree of Doctor of Medicine from the University of Pennsylvania Medical School. While in college he participated in baseball and track, and in Medical School was a member of the John B. Deaver Surgical Society.

Entering the naval service in January 1918 as Lieutenant (jg) U.S. Naval Reserve, he transferred to the regular Navy on December 25, 1920. He subsequently attained the rank of Captain to date from June 6, 1942. He was transferred to the Retired List of the Navy and promoted to the rank of Rear Admiral on the basis of combat citations on January 1, 1950.

After graduation from the University of Pennsylvania Medical School in 1910, he practiced medicine for several years in Philadelphia and served as Police Surgeon for the city of Philadelphia from 1911 until 1917. During World War I he had duty at the Navy Yard, Philadelphia aboard the USS FINLAND, and at the U.S. Navy Base Hospital #5, Brest, France. In late 1918 and throughout 1919 he served at the Navy Training Camp, Pelliam Bay, New York, and aboard the USS ALASKAN. During the next two years he was successively on board the USS PENSACOLA and at the Naval Training Station, Yerba Buena Island, California.

He joined the USS NANSHAN in 1922 and served as her Medical Officer for several months before transferring in a similar capacity to the USS ANTARES. After flight training at the Naval Air Station, Pensacola, Florida, he remained attached to that station until 1926, during which period he was designated Flight Surgeon at the Army School of Aviation Medicine, Mitchel Field, New York. He was assigned special duty at Pensacola in connection with personality study of candidates for aviation training.

Duty in 1927 as a Staff Medical Officer, attached to the USS AROOSTOOK, operating with Aircraft Squadrons, Battle Fleet, was followed by a second tour of duty at the Naval Air Station, Pensacola. Detached from the latter in 1932, he joined the USS CHICAGO; for two years' duty. He received letters of commendation for special work from the Chief of the Bureau of Navigation (September 27, 1930); the Commandant of the Naval Air Station, Pensacola (January 30, 1933); and the Editor of Aviation in 1933.

Detached from the USS CHICAGO in 1934, he had duty at the U.S. Naval Academy, Annapolis, Maryland, and again returned to Pensacola, where he had aviation training from June 30, 1937 until May 13, 1938, being designated Naval Aviator on April 31, 1938. He joined the USS ENTERPRISE and served as Staff Medical Officer throughout most of 1938. He was next ordered to Pearl Harbor, T.H., for duty with Patrol Wing 2 based there. He returned to the continental United States in 1939, and was on duty at the Naval Air Station, Alameda, California when the United States declared war on the Axis Powers, December 8, 1941.

Early in 1942 he again joined the USS ENTERPRISE and after brief duty as her senior Medical Officer had successive staff duty with Commander, Aircraft, Pacific, Commander South Pacific and Commander South Pacific Force. He was awarded the Legion of Merit for "exceptionally meritorious conduct....as Medical Officer in Charge of all Naval Aviation Activities on the staff of the Commander Aircraft South Pacific Area and South Pacific Force from January 1 to August 27, 1943....(He) conceived and developed principles for the allocation and coordination of the work of the medical officers of aviation activities in the area.... contributed materially to the drastic reduction of combat fatigue and Malaria among the Naval Air Forces (and) was instrumental in keeping to a minimum the loss of man power...."

He is also entitled to the ribbon for and a facsimile of the Presidential Unit Citation to the Enterprise and to those for the Navy Unit Commendation awarded that carrier for brilliant service during World War II.

Upon his return to the United States in 1944, Dr. DeFoney reported for duty at the Naval Air Station, Miami, Florida, where he served until ordered on July 11, 1946 to the Naval Air Station, Alameda, California. He remained on duty there as a Flight Surgeon until relieved of all active duty pending his retirement on January 1, 1950.

In addition to the Legion of Merit, Commendation Ribbon and the Ribbons for the Presidential Unit Citation and Navy Unit Commendation Rear Admiral DeFoney has the World War I Victory Medal with Overseas Clasp; the American Defense Service Medal; American Campaign Medal; Asiatic-Pacific Campaign Medal; and the World War II Victory Medal.

1 July 1950