

Commander Finney, born on June 15, 1910, entered the United States Naval Academy, Annapolis, Maryland, on June 14, 1928, and was graduated and commissioned Ensign on June 2, 1932. He subsequently progressed through the grades to the rank of Commander, to date from November 18, 1942.

Prior to World War II, Commander Finney served aboard the light cruiser MARBLEHEAD, the submarine tender BUSHNELL, and the destroyer HOVEY. Following duty aboard those vessels, he returned to Annapolis Maryland, for instruction at the Postgraduate School, continuing the course at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Cambridge, Massachusetts, where he received the degree of Master of Science in Aerology in 1941. Later that year he was ordered to duty in the Pacific, on the staff of Commander, Patrol Wing 7.

Commander Finney is entitled to a facsimile of, and ribbon for, the Presidential Unit Citation awarded the USS ESSEX, as a member of the crew of that carrier. The citation follows:

PRESIDENTIAL UNIT CITATION - USS ESSEX

"For extraordinary heroism in action against enemy Japanese forces in the air, ashore and afloat in the Pacific War Area from August 31, 1943, to August 15, 1945. Spearheading the concentrated carrier-warfare in forward areas; the ESSEX and her air groups struck crushing blows toward annihilating Japanese fighting power; they provided air cover for our amphibious forces; they fiercely countered the enemy's aerial attacks and destroyed his planes; and they inflicted terrific losses on the Japanese in Fleet and merchant marine units sunk or damaged. Daring and dependable in combat, the ESSEX and her gallant officers and men rendered loyal service in achieving the ultimate defeat of the Japanese Empire."

The citation accompanying the Legion of Merit awarded Commander Finney by Vice Admiral D. E. Barbey, USN, Commander, Seventh Fleet, for services during the amphibious operations of the Seventh Amphibious Force during the period January 1944 to July 1944, follows:

LEGION OF MERIT

"For distinguishing himself by exceptionally meritorious conduct in the performance of outstanding service in connection with amphibious operations against the enemy

Legion of Merit, continued:

as a member of the planning staff of Commander Seventh Amphibious Force during the period January 1944 to July 1944. He was also Force Navigator and Aerologist, and as such was directly concerned with the safe movement of large assault convoys enroute to landings at Aitape-Humboldt Bay, Tanamerah, Wakde, Biak, Noemfoor, Sansapor, Morotai, Leyte and Lingayen. Though accurate aerological data was frequently lacking, by his tireless efforts and sound judgment he provided information that contributed materially to the success of these amphibious operations and for subsequent landings which extended from Luzon through the Central and Southern Philippines, Sulu Archipelago to Borneo. During the approach for the landing at Leyte he displayed outstanding professional skill and able seamanship in directing the passage of several hundred ships through enemy minefields at the entrance to Leyte Gulf. He further displayed his professional skill by leading more than three hundred ships through the narrow confines of Surigao Strait. His excellent judgment in planning and his performance of duty throughout were in keeping with the highest traditions of the Navy of the United States."

After the war Commander Finney served first on the staff of Commander Fleet Air Wing Fourteen, and later on the staff of Commander United States Fourth Fleet. He reported aboard the destroyer BORDELON as Commanding Officer, in February, 1947. The ship joined the Northern European Task Force of Admiral Richard L. Conolly, Commander U. S. Naval Forces, Eastern Atlantic and Mediterranean, on September 11, 1947.

In addition to the Legion of Merit with Combat "V," and the ribbon for the Presidential Unit Citation to the USS ESSEX, Commander Finney has the American Defense Medal with Fleet Clasp, for service in the North Atlantic prior to December 7, 1941; the American Area Campaign Medal; the Asiatic-Pacific Area Campaign Medal with six battle stars; the Philippine Liberation Ribbon with two stars; and the World War II Victory Medal.

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29 March 1948