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Benjamin B. Dowell, Captain USNR

(Naval Aviator Number 230)

Benjamin Butterworth Dowell was born on October 18, 1895 in Silver Spring (Sligo) MD. He first entered the Navy by appointment of former Secretary of the Navy Josephus Daniels, in January 1917. He entered service as a Seaman Second Class as student for flight training. He completed flight training during September 1917, was designated Naval Aviator number 230 early in World War I and commissioned as Ensign, USNR, on Dec 20, 1917. He was a member of first class of Reserve students (30 in number) who trained at Pensacola, Florida and his Naval Aviator designation numbered among the first given to Reserve officers (designation number below first 60). He transferred to Regular Navy in 1920. Subsequently resigned and re-enrolled in Naval Reserve of which was a member since. He was recalled to active duty on October 1, 1940.

Duty Assignment Chronology

4/1/17-12/26/17 NAS Pensacola, FL. Aeronautical Ground school and flight training, including lighter-than-air as well as heavier-than-air, and including aircraft and engine structure and maintenance in addition to operation. Became section leader and captain of plane maintenance crew. Completed training and commissioned Ensign, USNR, with Naval Aviator designation (LTA and HTA) on December 26, 1917.

12/31/17-1/28/18 NAS Cape Hay, N. J. Executive Officer and flight operations duty. Also served as member and recorder of Summary Courts Martial in trial of numerous cases. Participated in regular deep sea and coastal patrol operations for protection of shipping in Atlantic along New Jersey seaboard. Earned the dubious distinction of bombing and killing a Whale mistaken for raiding German submarine while on deep sea patrol and search mission in the spring of 1918.

11/30/18-2/28/19 NAS, Pensacola, FL. Training in Aerology and active flight duty.

3/1/19-5/30/19 NAS Anacostia. Completion of training in Aerology by special additional duty assignment to U.S. Weather Bureau, Washington, D.C., and regular flight duty. Completed course and designated as qualified Aerologist.

6/1/19 Placed on inactive duty to accept appointment as Assistant Examiner in U.S. Patent Office by Commissioner Newton.

7/3/19 Recalled to active duty.

7/7/19-9/15/22 NAS, San Diego, CA. On regular flight and advanced training duty. Also served variously as Asst. Executive Officer, Personnel Officer, Squadron Director, Member of General Court Martial, Special Representative of Commandant 11th Naval District, for apprehension and conviction of bootleggers selling poisoned alcoholic beverages to Naval personnel, and Battalion Adjutant. Initiated first operations and training in night flying. During this period, took instruction and passed examinations for transfer to the Regular Navy and was commissioned in U.S.N. in latter part of 1921 or early 1922.

9/15/22 Resigned in 1922 and returned to Washington, D. C. to take up law practice. Repeated law course at George Washington University securing admission to Bar in 1923 and graduating in 1924, in meantime going into partnership with father who feared demise of business with himself in absence of established successorship. However, reenrolled soon thereafter in Naval Reserve to maintain active contact with the Navy.

10/1/40 Recalled to active duty in the Navy.

10/1/40-12/3/43 Bureau of Aeronautics, Washington, D.C. - Special Assistant to Director, Procurement Division, engaged in the negotiation and award of contracts for supply of aeronautical and related equipment and material to the Government, including production facilities.

12/3/43-6/1/44 Bureau of Aeronautics, Washington, D.C. - Special Asst. to Director, Ships Installations Division, engaged in design and development and in initial steps of investigating prospective manufacturers and negotiating production contracts for aeronautical equipment to be installed in Navy ships. During this period, attended Army War College special course in Contract Termination to prepare for administrative work in this field, and received Certificate of qualification on completion of course.

6/11/44-10/3/46 Bureau of Aeronautics General Representative, Central District, Dayton, Ohio. Assigned as Director of Contract Division to administer the program of contract termination and claims settlement for the Bureau of Aeronautics in the Central District (including some 20 Midwestern States), and also the program of continued active contracts. In addition, he served as Deputy Bureau of Aeronautics General Representative (or BAGR), Central District, and twice served as Acting BAGR of said District

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for periods of two months each while awaiting arrival of assigned Flag command.

12/18/46-8/1/74 Bureau of Aeronautics, Washington, D.C.
- Director of Contract Review Section, engaged in historical analyses and preparation of complete review reports on the principal important war contracts of BuAer in anticipated readiness for necessary accounting to Congressional investigating committees or other agencies of the Government.

8/1/47-12/48 (Material) to the Chief of the Bureau, engaged in special liaison work by appointment of the Assistant Secretary of the Navy for Air, consisting in collecting, coordinating and supplying official information and data to the President's Air Policy Commission and the Congressional Aviation Policy Board, including arrangements for appropriate witnesses to appear before each. Following publication of Commission and Board reports, assigned as Congressional Liaison Officer for the Bureau of Aeronautics, charged with responsibility for collecting, coordinating and furnishing requested official information and data to Congressional committees and members in accordance with Navy policy and classification restrictions and maintaining advisory check on impending and proposed legislation.

Military Decorations

Commendation Ribbon.

Naval Reserve Medal; World War I Victory Medal; American Defense Service Medal; American Area Medal, World War II Victory Medal.

Noteworthy achievements prior to entry in service:

Participated in special classes in Patent Law and Moot Court work, and passed the District of Columbia Bar Exam a year prior to graduation from Law School. He was a graduate of Sidwell's Friends School of Washington, D.C., George Washington University and received a L.L.B. degree from George Washington University School of Law in 1924.

He was a noteworthy lawyer, with 18 years experience in the practice of specialized law of patents, trademarks, copyrights and litigation thereon before U.S. Patent Office and U.S. federal courts and internationally, from 1922 to 1940. A member of the U.S. Court of Customs and Patent Appeals, U.S. District Court of the District of Columbia; U.S. District Court of Appeals, and other federal District courts. He was a member of the Washington, D.C., law firm of Dowell & Dowell of which he became owner as surviving partner, in 1928. The business was turned over to an existing partner on his re-entry into active naval service on October 1, 1940.