



Harold B. Miller, Rear Admiral, USN

Harold Blaine Miller was born in Newton, Iowa, on January 4, 1903, son of Abraham K. and Nora Belle Vanscoy Miller. On June 10, 1920, he entered the U. S. Naval Academy, Annapolis, Maryland, after attending Westlake School for Boys in Los Angeles, California. As a Midshipman at the Naval Academy, he participated in Lacrosse and Boxing. Graduated and commissioned Ensign on June 5, 1924, he subsequently advanced to the rank of Rear Admiral on April 18, 1945. He was transferred to the Retired List of the U. S. Navy in that rank on December 1, 1946.

After graduation from the Naval Academy in June 1924, he joined the USS *California*, and served as a junior officer in that battleship until February 1926, when he was ordered to the Naval Air Station, Pensacola, Florida, for flight training. Designated Naval Aviator on November 17, 1926, he joined Aircraft Squadrons Battle Fleet in February 1927, and had duty successively with observation Squadron ONE, aviation unit of the USS *West Virginia*, and Fighting Squadron TWO, based on the USS *Langley*. From January 1930 to June 1932 he was on duty at the Naval Air Station, Pensacola, first as a flight instructor, later as ground school instructor. While in that assignment he received a Letter of Commendation from the Secretary of the Navy in May 1930 for aiding in the rescue of a pilot who had crashed his seaplane in the water.

Transferred to the heavier-than-air unit of the airship AKRON, he flew planes on and off that dirigible until her loss off the coast of New Jersey, in April 1933. He next had duty in connection with the pre-commissioning detail of the airship MACON at the Naval Air Station, Lakehurst, New Jersey, and served with planes attached to that airship from her commissioning, June 23, 1933, until February 12, 1935. He was on board the MACON when she was lost off Point Sur, California. Ordered to the Naval Air Station, Sunnyvale, California, he served there until June 1935, then had duty with Scouting Squadron NINE, aviation unit of the USS *Northampton*, later of the USS *Salt Lake City*.

From April 1937 until June 1938 he served with Patrol Squadron 16, attached to the seaplane tender *Thrush*, and later to the tender *Teal*, which operated in the Alaskan Area during much of this period. In June 1938 he was transferred to Patrol Squadron 5 as Executive Officer, and in May 1939 assumed command. During his service with Patrol Squadron 5, which was redesignated Patrol Squadron 33, operating in the Central American and Caribbean Areas, his squadron won the Schiff Trophy for maximum flying time with minimum accident rate.

In June 1940 he reported as Aide and Flag Secretary on the Staff of Commander Carrier Division ONE (R. Adm. Arthur L. Bristol), and was attached to the flagship USS *Saratoga*. He continued staff duty when Admiral Bristol became Commander Aircraft, Scouting Force, and until February 1941 was attached to the flagship USS *Hulbert*. In March 1941 he became Aide and Flag Secretary to the Commander Support Force, U. S. Atlantic Fleet, and from October 1941 until February 1942 commanded the Flag Unit of the Support Force.

He was awarded the Legion of Merit with the following citation: "For exceptionally meritorious conduct in the performance of outstanding services to the Government of the United States as Aide and Flag Secretary on the Staff of the Commander of the Task Force, U. S. Atlantic Fleet, from March 3, 1941, to February 22, 1942, largely responsible for the details of the establishment and organization of the Task Force, (he) achieved distinctive success in developing close cooperation between units of the United Nations engaged in escort and antisubmarine operations in the North Atlantic. Captain Miller's brilliant executive ability and wide experience were essential factors in the planning, indoctrination and training of the composite forces and their subsequent success in the protection of our convoys and in the punishing offensive campaign against encroaching submarines by the Task Force."

Reporting next to the Navy Department, Washington, D. C., he organized and served as Head of the Training Literature Section, Training Division, Bureau of Aeronautics, from March 1942 until November 1943. He then reported for duty as Naval Attache for Air and Assistant U. S. Naval Attache, American Embassy, London, England. There he had additional duty with the Commander, U. S. Naval Forces in Europe. He was detached in September 1944 for duty as Public Relations Officer on the Staff of the Commander in Chief, U. S. Pacific Fleet.

"For exceptionally meritorious conduct...as Public Relations Officer on the Staff of the Commander in Chief, U. S. Pacific Fleet and Pacific Ocean Areas, from September 9, 1944, to April 12, 1945..." he was awarded a Gold Star in lieu, of the Second Legion of Merit. The citation continues: "During this period Captain Miller worked tirelessly to build a Public Relations section capable of meeting the rapidly expanding need for press, radio and pictorial coverage of Army, Navy, Marine Corps and Coast Guard activities in

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the Pacific Ocean Areas. The establishment of the Advance Headquarters of the Commander in Chief...at Guam necessitated the creation of many new facilities for the accommodation of War Correspondents accredited to the theater, and for the expeditious transmission of their written and pictorial material. This task was accomplished with outstanding efficiency, resulting in the moving of unprecedented volume of news material in record time, resulting from the assault and capture of Iwo Island and positions in the Tyukyu Islands. Through his devotion to duty and farsighted planning, representatives of the world press, and through them the American people, were supplied news of the Pacific war and of their Navy with maximum speed and in great volume..."

On April 23, 1945, with the accompanying rank of Rear Admiral, he became Director of the Office of Public Relations, Navy Department, and on June 18, 1945, his title was changed to Director of Public Information. He served in that capacity until relieved of all active duty on July 31, 1946, pending his retirement on December 1 of that year.

In addition to the Legion of Merit with Gold Star and his Special Letter of Commendation from the Secretary of the Navy, Rear Admiral Miller has the American Defense Service Medal with Bronze "A"; the European African-Middle Eastern Campaign Medal; the American Campaign Medal; the Asiatic-Pacific Campaign Medal; and the World War II Victory Medal.

After retirement Admiral Miller became Vice President of Trans World Airlines. Later he became Director of Information, American Petroleum Institute, and Director of Public Relations, Pan American World Airways. He was also the head of Radio Free Europe.

In 1928 he was married to Miss Jean Dupont of Berkeley, California, and a daughter, Joan, was born on April 4, 1931, at Pensacola, Florida. His second wife, to whom he was married in June 1946, and who died in February 1952, was the former Mrs. Mary Whately-Smith, widow of a British Army officer. In December 1953 he married Miss Mary Louise McGee of Kansas City, Missouri. Their first son, Harold Blaine Miller, Jr., was born on June 1, 1956. On October 23, 1957, a second son, Barry McGee Miller was born.

Admiral Miller is the author of numerous magazine articles, and a book, "Navy Wings." With his first wife, who was also a writer, he collaborated and published much fiction, including the Bob Wakefield Series (three books).