



Stunt Flyers of VF-1B
Front row right
LT Jackson R. Tate

Jackson R. Tate, Rear Admiral, USN

Jackson Rogers Tate was born in Clearwater, Florida, on October 15, 1898, son of Earnest Carnes and Leola Rogers Tate. He attended, Phillips Brooks Academy; Pennsylvania Money School; Ecola du Sud, in France; West Philadelphia High School; and Colombian Preparatory School, in Washington. On April 18, 1917 he enlisted in the U. S. Naval Reserve Force, and on December 2, 1918 was commissioned Ensign, USNRF. Transferring on May 26, 1929 to the U. S. Navy, he progressed, through subsequent promotions, to the rank of Captain, to date from June 18, 1942. He was transferred to the Retired List of the Navy on March 2, 1949, and advanced, to the rank of Rear Admiral on the basis of combat awards.

During World War I he served in minesweepers and transports, largely in the European area. In December 1918 he reported to Headquarters, Naval Auxiliary Reserve, New York, New York, and was assigned the next month to the USS *Agamemnon*, in which he served until August 1919. From September of that year until January 1920 he was aboard the battleship *Connecticut*, and after assisting in fitting out the USS *Borie* at William Cramp and Sons Shipbuilding Company, Philadelphia, he served aboard from her commissioning, March 20, 1920, until January 1922.

Eight months' duty in the USS *Langley* (CV-1) preceded instruction from January to September 1923 at the Naval Air Station, Pensacola, Florida. He then returned to the *Langley* for service as a Naval aviator from October 1923 to December 1924, and during that period was one of the first experimental pilots developing arresting gear on that vessel. For eighteen months thereafter he had duty with Fighting Squadron TWO, Aircraft Squadrons, Battle Fleet, the first carrier squadron so assigned, and participated in the search for Commander John Rodgers, USN, when he was lost on the first flight from the West Coast to Hawaii in 1925.

Ordered to the Canal Zone, he reported to the Naval Air Station, Coco Solo, in July 1926, and during his tour of

duty there, ending in February 1929, he served as Operations Officer and as Commanding Officer of Torpedo Squadron 3. He next joined Fighting Squadron 1-B based on the USS *Saratoga*. This was the "High Hat Squadron" which in 1929 led the Acrobatic Team at the National Air Races in Cleveland, Ohio, and which held the Leach Gunnery Trophy for two years. While so attached, he participated in the first dive bombing experiments.

Shore duty followed at the Naval Air Station, Naval Operating Base, Norfolk, Virginia, from June 1931 to June 1933. His assignment there, while attached to the Experimental and Test Division, included the development of arresting gear for carriers and testing planes for carrier use. For two years thereafter he was Senior Aviator aboard the USS *Mississippi*, operating off the West Coast as a unit of Battleship Division 3, Battle Fleet. During the year June 1935-June 1936 he commanded Fighting Squadron 5 of the USS *Ranger*, and when detached he returned to Pensacola, where for two years he commanded the Advanced Flying Squadron testing acrobatic night flying and instrument flying.

He joined the USS *Yorktown* (CV-5) in June 1938 and for the next two years served at her Air officer and Air Group Commander. In July 1940 he was sent to Sitka, Alaska, to build and develop a Naval Air Station in that city, and commanded that station from her commissioning until after the outbreak of war. He was awarded the Legion of Merit by the War Department and cited as follows:

"For exceptionally meritorious conduct in the performance of outstanding services to the Government of the United States as Commander of a Naval Air Station in Alaska. During the construction of an Army Post near the Air Station, he extended all possible assistance to the Army authorities faced with the problem of constructing a new post and quartering troops in inadequate shelter. By his energetic efforts in directing the completion of naval construction and then extending these facilities to the temporary use of Army troops many hardships for military personnel were

eliminated...”

In August and September 1940 he assisted in fitting out the USS *Core* (CVE 13) and the USS *Altamaha* (CVE 18) building at the Seattle-Tacoma Shipbuilding Corporation. He assumed command of the latter at her commissioning, September 15, 1942, and immediately proceeded to the South Pacific in time to participate in the Guadalcanal Campaign. “For exceptionally meritorious conduct...as Commanding Officer of the USS *Altamaha* in operations against enemy Japanese forces in the Pacific Area from September 1942 to October 1943...” he was awarded a Gold Star in lieu of the Second Legion of Merit. The citation further states:

“Charged with carrying out many dangerous missions and having little opportunity for preparation, Captain Tate skillfully and daringly maneuvered his ship through more than 70,000 miles of enemy-infested waters and successfully

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completed all of his assigned tasks under the most difficult combat conditions...(and) contributed materially to the defeat of the Japanese in a vital area of the Pacific.”

On his return to the United States in October 1943 after command of the *Altamaha* operating in the Indian Ocean, he was detached to the Second Marine Division as Air Support Officer for the Tarawa landing. Upon securing the island, he relieved Marine General Julian Smith as Island and Atoll Commander during the Gilberts-Marshalls Campaign. He was awarded a Gold Star in lieu of the Third Legion of Merit, with Combat “V” for outstanding services “as Commanding Officer of Tarawa Atoll from November 25, 1943 to February 23, 1944...(during which period he) skillfully directed the operations of the forces under his command in the successful and expeditious completion of the Tarawa air bases, despite hostile opposition and the difficulties of unfavorable weather conditions and terrain...”

Command of the Naval Air Station, Corpus Christi, Texas, for six months’ preceded an assignment from January to June 1945 as Senior Naval Member of the U. S. Military Mission to the Union of Soviet Socialist Republic, Moscow, Russia, under General John Deane, USA. After VE-Day he returned immediately to the Western Pacific, where he assumed command of the USS *Randolph* (CV 15), continuing in command until the end of hostilities. He was awarded a Gold Star in lieu of the Fourth Legion of Merit with Combat “V,” for exceptionally meritorious conduct...as Commanding Officer of the USS *Randolph* , during operations against enemy Japanese forces on the Japanese Homeland from July 26 to August 15, 1945...” The citation continues:

“Expertly maneuvering his ship and maintaining the fighting efficiency of the ship’s company and air group at a high peak, Captain Tate directed the launching of air strikes and sweeps against hostile installations and forces to inflict damaging blows on the enemy, thereby hastening the final surrender...”

Detached from command of the *Randolph* in September

1946, he successively commanded the Naval Air Station, Terminal Island, California; Naval Air Facility, Litchfield Park, Arizona; Naval Air Station, Santa Ana, California; and the Naval Air Station, Alameda, California, with additional duty from March 1948 to February 1949 as Commander, Naval Air Bases, Twelfth Naval District. He was released from all active duty on February 26, 1949, and retired effective March 1, 1949.

In addition to the Legion of Merit (Army) and Gold Stars in lieu of the Second, Third, and Fourth Legion of Merit with Combat “V,” Rear Admiral Tate has the Victory Medal, Transport Clasp (World War I); the American Defense Service Medal, Fleet Clasp; Asiatic-Pacific Campaign Medal; European-African-Middle Eastern Campaign Medal; American Campaign Medal; World War II Victory Medal; and Navy Occupation Service Medal, Asia Clasp.

Rear Admiral Tate was married to the former Miss Helen Harris of Madison, New Jersey. He had five children: Hugh, William, Roderick, Sonja, and Jacqueline Tate.