

THE CAPTAIN OF THE USS MULLINNIX

Commander John Clayton HILL, II, U.S. Navy, was born on August 30, 1919, at Annapolis, Maryland. The son of Admiral and Mrs. Harry W. HILL, USN (retired), he was raised in a naval environment and decided early on a naval career. After attending the University of Virginia at Charlottesville for one year, he entered the Naval Academy in 1938 as a member of the class of 1942. With the pressure of impending war, he was commissioned Ensign in December 1941 under an accelerated program, having graduated in the upper third of his class.

Initially ordered to report to the old battleship, U.S.S. MISSISSIPPI on Christmas Day 1941, his orders were changed to attend the U.S. Naval Fire Control School in Washington, D.C., and to report on board the new battleship U.S.S. SOUTH DAKOTA (BB-57), then building at Camden, New Jersey. Destined to remain in this ship throughout the war, Commander HILL served in various gunnery and operational capacities of increasing responsibility until December 1946, at which time he was Gunnery officer preparing this mighty ship for deactivation in the "moth-ball" fleet. Famed as "Battleship X", the SOUTH participated in thirteen of the sixteen major campaigns in the Pacific, with additional operations in the Atlantic. In the Pacific, Commander HILL participated in such actions as the Battle of Coral Sea, the Third Battle of Savo Island, the famous "Marianas Turkey Shoot", and numerous other actions and bombardments of enemy held territory, including the first bombardment of the Japanese homeland. In the Atlantic, he was present when the SOUTH DAKOTA, working with the British Home Fleet at Scapa Flow in the Orkney Island attempted unsuccessfully to lure the German dreadnought TIRPITZ to sea and ultimate destruction at Allied hands. For his outstanding performance of duty in gunnery and fire control billets during this period

Commander HILL was awarded the Bronze Star Medal, with the combat 'V' authorized.

Following detachment from the SOUTH DAKOTA in late 1946, Commander HILL received orders as Aide and Flag Lieutenant to the Commander Naval Operating Base, Guantanamo Bay, Cuba. He served in this Capacity until December 1948, when he was ordered to the new light cruiser USS ROANOKE (CL-145) then building, with duties as navigator.

In December 1949, new orders took Commander HILL to the Staff of the Commandant Fourth Naval District at Philadelphia, Pa., for duty as the Assistant for Organized Naval Reserve. In May, 1951 he was ordered to the Fleet Sonar School in Key West, Florida as a student in the prospective commanding and executive's course in anti-submarine warfare. Graduating in June 1951, he reported to the destroyer USS BORIE (DD-704) as Executive Officer and Navigator.

Commander HILL served in the BORIE until August, 1952 when he took command of his first ship, the destroyer escort USS PARLE (DE-708). He commanded the PARLE until January 1954 when he received orders to report to the Armed Forces Staff College in Norfolk, Virginia as a student.

In July 1957, he was ordered to the Staff of Admiral Jerauld Wright, Commander in Chief U.S. Atlantic Fleet with headquarters in Norfolk, Virginia. He served as the Assistant Officer in Charge of the Fleet Operational Control Center until April 1959, when he received orders to command the destroyer U.S.S. MULLINNIX in July 1959.

Commander HILL is the husband of the former Miss Mary Helen Rodman, daughter of Associate Justice and Mrs. William B. Rodman, Jr. of Washington and Raleigh, North Carolina.

The HILL's have three children: Marcia Rodman, 15; Elizabeth Stockett, 12; and John Clayton, 8. They presently reside at 7018 Gardner Drive Norfolk, Virginia.