

= Raymond D. Tarbuck =

Raymond D. Tarbuck ( 4 May 1897 ? 15 November 1986 ) was a rear admiral in the United States Navy who is best known as a planner with General Douglas MacArthur 's General Headquarters ( GHQ ) Southwest Pacific Area during World War II .

A 1920 graduate of the United States Naval Academy in Annapolis , Maryland , Tarbuck spent most of his early career on destroyers . During a tour of duty in the Caribbean , he served ashore with the United States occupation of Nicaragua . Later , while at the Naval War College at Newport , Rhode Island , he wrote a thesis entitled " The Nicaraguan Policy of the United States " , which was subsequently published by the United States Naval Institute .

Tarbuck received his first command , the destroyer USS Macdonough in May 1939 , and in March 1941 , he assumed command of Destroyer Division 70 . Then , in October 1941 , he became an instructor in air observer and navigator training with the United States Army Air Corps at Maxwell Field , Alabama . In 1943 he was assigned to General MacArthur 's GHQ , where he planned a series of combined operations , and accurately predicted the course of the Battle of Leyte Gulf . He served with GHQ until December 1944 , when he became chief of staff of the VII Amphibious Force .

After the war he became the chief of staff of Amphibious Forces , Atlantic Fleet . His last command was of the battleship USS Iowa . He retired from active service on 1 July 1950 , and received a tombstone promotion to the rank of rear admiral .

= = Early life = =

Raymond Dumbell { Sic } ( Ray ) Tarbuck was born in Philadelphia on 4 May 1897 . His middle name caused him embarrassment and was seldom used , and he preferred the shortened form of his first name . He was educated at Philadelphia Central High School and the Philadelphia College of Pedagogy , where he studied to be a teacher , graduating with a Bachelor of Arts degree . He also attended the Naval Academy Preparatory School .

Tarbuck was appointed to the United States Naval Academy in Annapolis , Maryland in June 1917 by Congressman George W. Edmonds of Pennsylvania 's 4th congressional district . At the Academy he was on the shooting team , and was assistant art editor of the Lucky Bag , and the editor of The Log magazine . While there he took his summer cruises on the battleships USS Missouri and USS North Dakota during World War I. He was commissioned as an ensign on graduation on 5 June 1920 . His class was graduated in two groups due to the disruption caused by World War I. For his first assignment , he chose the destroyer tender USS Dixie , because it was based at the League Island Navy Yard in Philadelphia , and he was in love with Marion Orf , a woman who lived in Philadelphia 's Germantown section . The two were married in 1921 . They had a son , Richard Ray Tarbuck , and a daughter , Joan .

As had been his intention , Tarbuck 's early service was on destroyers , first as engineer and radio officer on the USS Robinson and then as chief engineer on the USS McCormick from 1922 to 1924 . The ship sailed to the Black Sea , where Tarbuck observed the Russian Civil War first hand . He served in succession as torpedo officer on the destroyer USS Sharkey , as a communications officer on the cruiser USS Concord and as gunnery officer on the destroyer USS Flusser . During this cruise in the Caribbean , he served ashore with the United States occupation of Nicaragua .

Tarbuck attended the Naval Postgraduate School at Annapolis from 1927 to 1928 , and then the Naval War College at Newport , Rhode Island . While there he wrote a thesis entitled " The Nicaraguan Policy of the United States " , which was subsequently published by the United States Naval Institute . He returned to sea in 1929 as executive officer of the destroyer USS Stewart , which sailed to China , Japan and the Philippines as part of the Asiatic Fleet . His daughter Joan died in Shanghai . On returning to the United States in 1932 , he was assigned to the University of California as a Naval Reserve Officers Training Corps instructor . He taught astronomy there as an assistant professor . Robert Gordon Sproul requested that Tarbuck be permanently assigned to the university , but the Navy turned him down on the grounds that Tarbuck 's career would suffer without

sea duty . Tarbuck 's next assignment was to a battleship , the USS West Virginia , where he was promoted to lieutenant commander . Following the pattern of alternating duty at sea with duty ashore , he was assigned to the Fleet Training Division of the Bureau of Navigation from June 1937 to May 1939 .

= = World War II = =

In May 1939 , Tarbuck received his first command , of the destroyer USS Macdonough , which was part of the U.S. Pacific Fleet . While he was its captain , he was promoted to the rank of commander . In March 1941 , he assumed command of Destroyer Division 70 , which consisted of five destroyers based on the West Coast . In October 1941 , he was ordered to report to the Naval Air Station Pensacola , an unusual destination for a non @-@ aviator . The United States Army Air Corps had requested that some Naval officers be sent to Maxwell Field , Alabama , as instructors in air observer and navigator training , and Tarbuck was one of the three officers selected . At Maxwell , he wrote three manuals on ship and aircraft recognition , which became course materials . The ability to speak " Army " , and knowledge of the conduct of land , sea and air operations , would prove important in his selection for his next post . He was promoted to captain on 20 June 1942 .

In 1943 , the Supreme Commander in the Southwest Pacific Area , General Douglas MacArthur , requested a Naval officer for his General Headquarters ( GHQ ) to replace Captain Herbert J. Ray , an officer who had escaped from the Philippines with him in 1942 . Ray had been appointed to command the battleship USS Maryland , and Tarbuck was chosen to replace him . En route to Australia , Tarbuck met with Admiral Chester Nimitz , who told him in no uncertain terms that anti @-@ Army and anti @-@ MacArthur sentiments had no place in his command . As it was , Tarbuck became a loyal supporter of MacArthur .

Tarbuck expected to become the head of a naval section within GHQ , but instead found himself part of Brigadier General Stephen J. Chamberlin G @-@ 3 Section , the staff section responsible for planning and operations . He found that more than forty naval officers were working at GHQ , but they were dispersed , working in nearly every corner of the staff . Tarbuck became head of a planning group known as the Red Team . This was one of three teams ; there was also a White Team under a US army officer , Colonel Peyton , and a Blue Team under an Australian Army officer , Brigadier Tom White .

His job was to prepare staff studies on upcoming potential operations . While he did do naval planning , his team prepared plans that coordinated land , air and sea operations . A staff study might be put into effect and become an operation , or MacArthur might shelve it in favor of an alternative operation , especially if the staff study revealed that it would be too time @-@ consuming , difficult or costly . The three teams would work simultaneously on three different objectives in leapfrog fashion . Tarbuck routinely attended staff conferences that involved naval matters .

He led the planning for the Battle of Leyte , known as Operation King II , and predicted that the Japanese fleet would attempt to intervene , striking at the invasion force through the Surigao Strait . His warning that the Japanese fleet would sortie was discounted by MacArthur 's chief intelligence officer , Brigadier General Charles A. Willoughby , but Tarbuck put his objection in writing . MacArthur would later commend him for an accurate prediction of the course of the Battle of Leyte Gulf .

Tarbuck was on hand to see the battle as an observer on the command ship USS Blue Ridge . He watched as his predictions on the courses of the Battle of Surigao Strait and Battle off Samar unfolded . On the morning of 25 October he wrote :

It now becomes apparent that an extremely critical situation exists . The enemy 's Second Diversion Attack Force has sortied into the Pacific Ocean through the San Bernardino Strait under the cover of darkness to attack our escort carriers , convoys , or Leyte Gulf shipping .

A while later he wrote :

People here feel that Halsey 's Third Fleet are chasing a secondary force , leaving us at the mercy ? of which there is none ? of the enemy 's main body .

In his report on the battle , Vice Admiral Randall Jacobs called Tarbuck 's predictions as " almost

uncanny " . For his service with GHQ , Tarbuck was awarded the Legion of Merit .

In December 1944 , Tarbuck became chief of staff of the VII Amphibious Force , which was under the command of Rear Admiral Daniel E. Barbey . He was promoted to the wartime rank of commodore on 3 April 1945 . When Barbey went on leave , he left Tarbuck in command of VII Amphibious Force , despite the fact that his three amphibious group commanders , William Fechteler , Albert G. Noble and Arthur D. Struble were all rear admirals . They were in overall command of the operations for which they were responsible however . For his service as chief of staff of the VII Amphibious Force , Tarbuck was awarded a second Legion of Merit . His citation read :

For distinguishing himself by exceptionally meritorious conduct in connection with amphibious operations against Japanese forces in the Philippine Islands and Borneo from December 1944 to July 1945 . As chief of staff to Commander , VII Amphibious Force he was directly concerned with the planning and execution of all amphibious operations in the Southwest Pacific during this period . These included the landings on the island of Luzon at Lingayen , Zambales , Nasugbu , Legaspi , Bataan , Corregidor , and on the islands guarding the entrance to Manila Bay ; on the islands of Palawan , Lubang , Panay , Cebu , Negros , Masbati , Jolo and Buhol ; on the island of Mindanao at Zamboanga , Parang , Macajala Bay and Davao ; in Borneo at Tarakan and Brunei Bay . In addition he assisted in the preparation of plans for minesweeping operations covering an area of approximately six thousand square miles in Philippine waters .

= = Later life = =

Tarbuck became the chief of staff of Amphibious Forces , Atlantic Fleet in December 1945 . He reverted to the rank of captain on 20 June 1946 . On 30 June he assumed command of the battleship USS Iowa . After a year in this command , he became Inspector General of the Eleventh Naval District at San Diego , California . At the conclusion of this posting , he retired from active service on 1 July 1950 . On retirement , he received a tombstone promotion to the rank of rear admiral .

He became program administrator for the San Diego Fine Arts Gallery , and served with the San Diego Board of Health and other community projects . He also served on the South Bay Committee for San Diego . He died in Coronado , California on 15 November 1986 , and was interred in the Fort Rosecrans National Cemetery , San Diego , California . His papers are in the Douglas MacArthur Memorial in Norfolk , Virginia .