

THE COMMANDING OFFICER

Commander Alva L. Blanks, U. S. Navy, recently began his twenty-fifth year of active Naval Service. A native of Poplar Bluffs, Missouri, Commander Blanks saw World War II coming and enlisted in the Navy in January 1940. While serving on USS BOISE (CL-47) he participated in various Pacific campaigns, including the Second Battle of Savo Island in October 1942. Advancing to the rate of YN1 while serving on the BOISE, he was selected as an officer candidate in the V-12 Program in July of 1943.

Completing the V-12 and NROTC curriculums at Harvard and Yale Universities, Commander Blanks was commissioned Ensign on 20 October 1945. Concurrently he received his B. A. degree from Yale.

From his commissioning to the present, Commander Blanks has served on a total of six ships, ranging in size from the TANAGER (AM-385) to the cruiser PROVIDENCE. During the Korean War, he served as CIC Officer on LOWRY (DD-770). Subsequently, he became commanding officer of USS BULLOCH COUNTY (LST-509), and still later, Executive Officer of STEINAKER (DD-863).

At intervals between his sea tours Commander Blanks has found time both for staff duty and for further education. He served as Aide and Flag Secretary to Commander, Cruiser Division Six, and in 1958 as Aide and Flag Secretary to Commander Cruiser Force, Atlantic Fleet. Commander Blanks has attended the General Line School and the Naval War College, in Newport, Rhode Island; the ASW Tactical School in Norfolk, Virginia; and Stanford University, where he received a Masters degree in Education.

In May 1965, Commander Blanks will leave BORIE for duty in the Bureau of Naval Personnel, Washington, D. C.

