

GAO

Fact Sheet for the Chairman,
Subcommittee on Investigations,
Committee on Armed Services, House of
Representatives

August 1988

MILITARY PERSONNEL

Experience of Prominent Generals and Admirals



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National Security and
International Affairs Division

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August 4, 1988

The Honorable Bill Nichols
Chairman, Subcommittee on
Investigations
Committee on Armed Services
House of Representatives

Dear Mr. Chairman:

As you requested, we analyzed the career experience of prominent generals and admirals selected by the Subcommittee. You asked us to provide this information for your use in considering the impact of a joint duty tour on the career paths of officers. As a result of title IV of the Goldwater-Nichols Department of Defense Reorganization Act of 1986, a joint duty assignment is a prerequisite for promotion to brigadier general or rear admiral (lower half).

This fact sheet provides information on the experience of the 18 prominent generals and admirals of the World War II era identified by your Office. As you requested, it focuses on their experience during their field grade years.¹

We obtained records for these officers from the historical centers of the military services. Using these records, we classified the field grade service of the selected officers by the types of assignments, such as command assignments, currently used by the Department of Defense (DOD) to evaluate the experience of candidates for promotion to general and admiral ranks.

The assignment experience of the 18 officers is summarized in appendix I. Appendixes II-VI contain more detailed information on the field grade service of the selected officers. The field grade time for 11 of the officers ranged from 18.1 to 23.3 years. The field grade time for the other seven was 1.8, 2.6, 2.7, 3.5, 6.7, 8.6, and 17.6 years. All the Navy and Marine Corps officers and several of the Army officers spent 18 years or more as field grade officers.

¹Field grade refers to the grades of major, lieutenant colonel, and colonel (Navy lieutenant commander, commander, and captain).

Navy officers spent the highest proportion of their field grade years in war-fighting assignments. On average, the Navy officers spent 12.3 years in war-fighting assignments and 8.0 years in non-war-fighting assignments during their field grade years. Historical records also showed that two Air Force generals and two Army generals were never assigned to any of the key war-fighting positions DOD currently considers essential for assuming higher level commands.

The maximum period of consecutive non-war-fighting assignments showed a median of 4.4 years overall with a median of 3 years for the Navy to a median of 6.9 years for the Army. Nearly all of the 18 officers served in the headquarters of their service and generally spent in excess of 3 years of their total field grade time in headquarters positions. With regard to both these statistics, it should be noted that 3 of the 6 Air Force officers had less than 3 years total field grade service and one Army officer had just 3-1/2 years field grade service.

Some of the field grade service, which began prior to World War I for several of the officers, is not comparable to current conditions. For example, one Air Force general who did not have any key operational assignments spent over 16 years as a company grade officer prior to the entry of the United States into World War II.² However, he served only 2-1/2 years as a field grade officer before being promoted to brigadier general during the rapid wartime expansion of the military. Quite apart from field grade experience, 11 of the 18 were promoted to brigadier general between 1939 and 1943, and one was promoted to brigadier general during World War I (see app. I).

We discussed the information we obtained with DOD officials. They urged that caution be exercised in using the experience of these officers as a basis for determining what officers should be doing now. The careers of these officers largely spanned World War I and World War II; the force structure and opportunities were much different then than they are now.

As arranged with your Office, we plan no further distribution of this fact sheet until 30 days from the date of this letter. At that time, we will send copies to interested parties and make copies available to others

²Company grade refers to the grades of second lieutenant, first lieutenant, and captain (Navy ensign, lieutenant junior grade, and lieutenant).

upon request. If you need further information, please call me at 275-8412.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Martin M. Ferber". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Martin M Ferber
Senior Associate Director

Contents

Letter		1
Appendix I Assignment Experience of Selected Generals and Admirals		6
Appendix II Field Grade Experience of Selected Generals and Admirals		10
Appendix III Field Grade Service of Selected Admirals and Generals in War- Fighting and Non-War- Fighting Assignments		11
Appendix IV Air Force		12
	General Henry H. Arnold	12
	General James Doolittle	13
	General Ira C. Eaker	13
	General Curtis Lemay	14
	General Carl Spaatz	14
	General Hoyt Vandenberg	15
Appendix V Army		16
	General Omar N. Bradley	16
	General Mark W. Clark	17
	General Dwight D. Eisenhower	17
	General Douglas MacArthur	18
	General George C. Marshall	19
	General George S. Patton	19

Contents

Appendix VI		20
Marine Corps	General Holland M. Smith	20
	General Alexander A. Vandergrift	21
Appendix VII		22
Navy	Admiral William F. Halsey	22
	Admiral Ernest J. King	23
	Admiral William D. Leahy	24
	Admiral Chester W. Nimitz	24
Tables		
	Table I.1: Experience of Selected Officers	6
	Table IV.1: Field Grade Experience of Selected Air Force Generals	12
	Table V.1: Field Grade Experience of Selected Army Generals	16
	Table VI.1: Field Grade Experience of Selected Marine Corps Generals	20
	Table VII.1: Field Grade Experience of Selected Navy Admirals	22
Figure		
	Figure I.1: Experience of Selected Officers	8

Abbreviations

DOD Department of Defense
GAO General Accounting Office

Assignment Experience of Selected Generals and Admirals

The assignment experience of selected generals and admirals is shown in table I.1 and depicted graphically in figure I.1.

Table I.1: Experience of Selected Officers

Figures in years

Generals/admirals	Dates of service	Assignment experience			Total
		Company grade ^a	Field grade ^b	Admiral/general	
Air Force					
Henry Arnold	1907-46	10.1	17.6	11.0 ^c	38.7
James Doolittle	1920-46	9.7	1.8 ^d	4.3	15.8
Ira C. Eaker	1917-47	17.6	6.7	5.7	30.0
Curtis LeMay	1928-65	12.7	2.6	21.3	36.6
Carl Spaatz	1914-48	4.4	21.9	7.7	34.0
Hoyt Vandenberg	1923-53	16.7	2.7	10.6	30.0
Army					
Omar Bradley	1915-81	5.0	20.8	40.1 ^e	65.9
Mark Clark	1917-53	15.7	8.6	11.9	36.2
Dwight Eisenhower	1915-52 1961-69	2.7	23.3	19.0 ^e	45.0
Douglas MacArthur	1903-37 1941-64	11.5	3.5	42.4 ^e	57.4
George Marshall	1901-59	16.5	19.1	23.1 ^e	58.7
George Patton	1909-45	8.6	22.7	5.3	36.6
Marine Corps					
Holland Smith	1905-46	12.2	22.2	6.8	41.2
Alexander Vandergrift	1909-49	9.5	21.7	9.1	40.3
Navy					
William Halsey	1906-47	10.5	21.5	9.0 ^e	41.0
Ernest King	1903-56	10.1	19.8	23.1 ^e	53.0
William Leahy	1899-1939 1942-59	10.1	18.1	28.9 ^e	57.1
Chester Nimitz	1907-66	9.6	21.7	27.8 ^e	59.1

^aCompany grade for Navy includes ensign, lieutenant junior grade, and lieutenant, and for the other military services, second lieutenant, first lieutenant, and captain.

^bField grade for Navy includes lieutenant commander, commander, and captain, and for the other military services, major, lieutenant colonel, and colonel.

^cAppointed to permanent rank of General of the Army and subsequently, General of the Air Force.

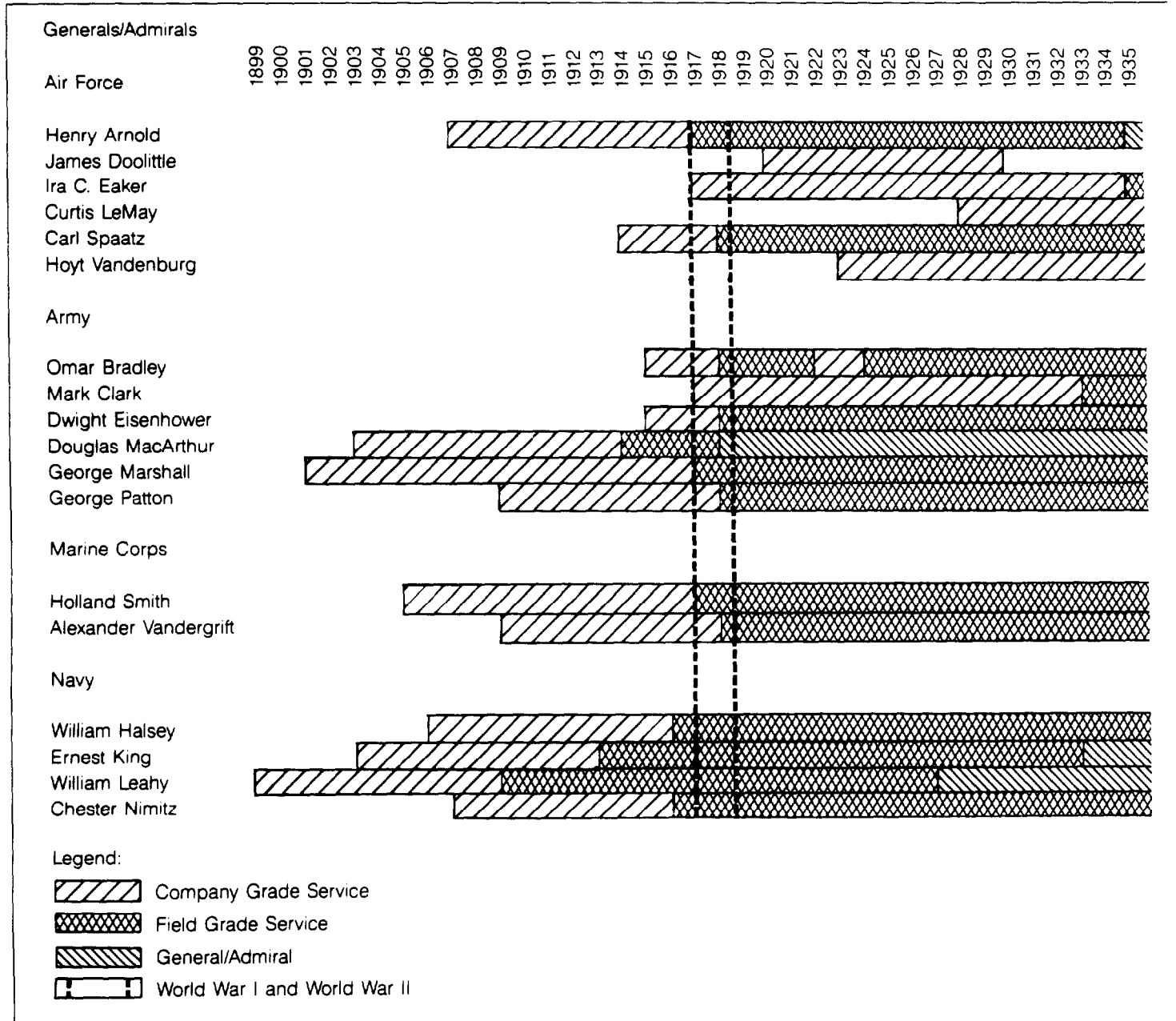
^dServed as a major in the Army Air Force Reserve from March 1930 to June 1940.

^eAppointed rank of General of the Army or Fleet Admiral, which provided active-duty status until voluntary retirement or death.

**Appendix I
Assignment Experience of Selected Generals
and Admirals**

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Figure I.1: Experience of Selected Officers



**Appendix I
Assignment Experience of Selected Generals
and Admirals**



Field Grade Experience of Selected Generals and Admirals

Average time in years

	Average time for all officers				
	Air Force	Army	Marine Corps	Navy	All services
Key war-fighting positions^a	3.4	3.2	1.1	9.4	4.4
Other positions in major war-fighting commands ^b	0.1	1.3	5.0	2.9	1.7
Total war-fighting assignments	3.5	4.5	6.1	12.3	6.1
Non-war-fighting assignments					
Military service headquarters	3.0	3.5	3.6	3.5	3.3
Professional military education	0.9	1.4	1.3	0.9	1.1
Positions in non-war-fighting commands	1.5	6.9	11.0	3.6	4.9
Total non-war-fighting assignments	5.4	11.8	15.9	8.0	9.3
Total field grade service	8.9	16.3	22.0	20.3	15.4

^aKey war-fighting positions are identified in appendixes IV-VI.

^bIncludes divisions and armies, capital ships and fleets, theater headquarters and numbered air force, and marine brigade and expeditionary force.

Field Grade Service of Selected Admirals and Generals in War-Fighting and Non-War-Fighting Assignments

Figures in years

Generals/admirals	Field grade assignments		Total	Maximum period of consecutive non-war-fighting assignments ^a
	War-fighting assignments	Non-war-fighting assignments		
Air Force				
Henry Arnold	9.8	7.8	17.6	5.4
James Doolittle	0.0	1.8	1.8	1.8
Ira C. Eaker	0.7	6.0	6.7	5.6
Curtis Lemay	2.3	0.3	2.6	0.3
Carl Spaatz	7.8	14.1	21.9	7.3
Hoyt Vandenberg	0.2	2.5	2.7	2.5
Average	3.5	5.4	8.9	3.9^b
Army				
Omar Bradley	3.1	17.7	20.8	13.8
Mark Clark	2.7	5.9	8.6	4.5
Dwight Eisenhower	4.1	19.2	23.3	13.3
Douglas MacArthur	0.7	2.8	3.5	2.8
George Marshall	4.5	14.6	19.1	9.3
George Patton	12.3	10.4	22.7	4.2
Average	4.5	11.8	16.3	6.9^b
Marine Corps				
Holland Smith	8.7	13.5	22.2	4.6
Alexander Vandergrift	3.5	18.2	21.7	8.5
Average	6.1	15.9	22.0	6.5^b
Navy				
William Halsey	11.1	10.4	21.5	3.3
Ernest King	14.7	5.1	19.8	2.2
William Leahy	9.4	8.7	18.1	2.9
Chester Nimitz	13.7	8.0	21.7	3.1
Average	12.3	8.0	20.3	3.0^b
Average, all services	6.1	9.3	15.4	4.4^b

^aThe maximum period of consecutive non-war-fighting assignments was used in our briefing report on joint duty tour lengths (GAO/NSIAD-88-184BR) as an indication of whether a 3-1/2-year joint tour could be accommodated without significantly impacting assignment patterns or affecting assignments to war-fighting positions.

^bMedian years.

Air Force

The field grade experience of selected Air Force generals is summarized in table IV.1 and the biographical data for each general, including field grade experiences,¹ follow the table.

Table IV.1: Field Grade Experience of Selected Air Force Generals

Average time in years	Average time		
	Officers who served in position	Officers who served in position	All officers
War-fighting assignments			
Key assignments			
Squadron operations officer	1	0.5	0.1
Squadron commander	4	1.8	1.2
Wing commander	2	0.9	0.3
Support organization commander	2	5.5	1.8
Total key assignments			3.4
Major war-fighting commands	2	0.2	0.1
Total war-fighting assignments			3.5
Non-war-fighting assignments			
Military service headquarters	5	3.6	3.0
Professional military education ^a	3	1.8	0.9
Non-war-fighting commands	5	1.8	1.5
Total non-war-fighting assignments			5.4
Total field grade time			8.9

^aThree officers attended an intermediate service school and one of these three also attended a senior service school.

General Henry H. Arnold

General Arnold was a pioneer airman who was taught to fly by the Wright Brothers, and commanded the Army air forces against Germany and Japan in World War II. He contributed to most of the major milestones in the development of America's air power until his retirement in 1946.

Arnold was appointed second lieutenant after his graduation from the U.S. Military Academy in 1907. He was promoted to major in 1917, after 10 years of commissioned service.

¹The biographical data on the field grade experience of all generals include their more extensive assignments. Assignments of short duration are generally omitted.

As a field grade officer, Arnold was assigned to duty in Washington, D.C., where he served in the Aviation Section of the Signal Corps and the Military Aeronautics Division. Following assignments to the Western District of the Air Service at Coronado, California, and to the IX Corps Area, Presidio of San Francisco, Arnold became commanding officer of Rockwell Field. He graduated from the Army Industrial College in 1925, and then was assigned to the Office of the Chief of the Air Corps in Washington, D.C. He became commander of an air corps detachment at Fort Riley, Kansas, in 1926. Following graduation from the Command and General Staff School in 1929, Arnold commanded the Fairfield Air Depot in Ohio and then March Field, California.

Arnold was promoted to brigadier general in 1935.

General James Doolittle

General Doolittle was an early holder of air speed records, leader of the first aerial attack on the Japanese mainland, and a famed World War II air commander.

Doolittle was commissioned as a second lieutenant in the Regular Army in 1920. He was promoted to major in 1930, after 9 years of commissioned service.

As a field grade officer, Doolittle was a member of the Army Air Corps Reserve from 1930-40. In 1940, he went back to active duty as an Assistant District Supervisor of the Central Air Corps Procurement District at Indianapolis, Indiana, and at Detroit, Michigan. In 1941, Doolittle went to England as a member of a special mission to obtain information about air forces and military buildups in other countries. Then, he was assigned to Army Air Corps headquarters to plan the first aerial raid on the Japanese homeland, which he led on April 18, 1942.

Doolittle was promoted to brigadier general April 28, 1942.

General Ira C. Eaker

General Eaker was the Air Commander in Chief of the Mediterranean Allied Air Forces during World War II and Commanding General of the 8th Air Force and the U.S. Army Air Force in the United Kingdom. He led bombing raids over Germany and occupied France.

Eaker's military career began as a second lieutenant with the 64th Infantry in August 1917 at El Paso, Texas. In 1918, he decided to

become a flyer. Eaker was promoted to major in 1935, after 17 years of commissioned service.

As a field grade officer, Eaker served with the Navy aboard the aircraft carrier Lexington in maneuvers near Hawaii and Guam. He graduated from the Air Corps Tactical School at Maxwell Field, Alabama, and the Command and General Staff School at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas. In July 1937, he became Assistant Chief of the Information Division at Headquarters Air Corps in Washington D.C. Then, he became commanding officer of the 20th Pursuit Group at Hamilton Field, California. In 1941, Eaker went to England for special duty with the Royal Air Force to observe and fly new types of fighter planes and to study fighter control methods.

Eaker was promoted to brigadier general in 1942.

General Curtis Lemay

General LeMay was Chief of Staff of the Strategic Air Forces in the Pacific and a world symbol of the nation's strategic air power through his combat experience with the B-29s in World War II and the buildup of the Strategic Air Command.

In 1928, he was appointed second lieutenant. He subsequently completed pilot training at Kelly Field, Texas, and was commissioned in the Air Corps Reserve in October 1929. LeMay was promoted to major in 1941, after 12 years of commissioned service.

LeMay spent nearly all his field grade years in war-fighting positions. He served as commanding officer of the 7th Bombardment Squadron at Langley Field, Virginia; operations officer for the 34th Bombardment Group at Westover Field, Massachusetts; executive officer of the 306th Bombardment Group at Wendover Field, Utah, and commanding officer of the 305th Bombardment Group at Edwards Field, California, and the 4th Bombardment Wing in England.

LeMay was promoted to brigadier general in 1943.

General Carl Spaatz

General Spaatz, considered one of the great air leaders in the victory over Germany in World War II, was Commander of Strategic Air Forces in Europe during World War II. He subsequently became the first Chief of Staff of the U.S. Air Force.

After graduating from the U.S. Military Academy, Spaatz was commissioned as a second lieutenant in 1914. He was promoted to major in 1918,² after 4 years of commissioned service.

As a field grade officer, Spaatz was commanding officer of the 1st Pursuit Group at Kelly Field, Texas, and post commander of Selfridge Field, Michigan, from 1921-24. After graduating from the Air Service Tactical School, he served in the Office of the Chief of the Air Corps until 1928. From 1929-33, he commanded the 7th Bombardment Group at Rockwell Field and the Rockwell Air Depot in California and the 1st Bombardment Wing at March Field, California. Then, he served in the Office of the Chief of the Air Corps and graduated from the Command and General Staff School in 1936. His next assignments were in the General Headquarters Air Force, Langley Field, Virginia, and in the Office of the Chief of Air Corps, Washington, D.C.

He was promoted to brigadier general in 1940.

General Hoyt Vandenberg

General Vandenberg gained national prominence as the second Chief of Staff of the U.S. Air Force from 1948-53. During this period, he advocated rebuilding conventional air forces, which had greatly diminished after World War II, and establishing a nuclear deterrence by the Air Force. He also commanded U.S. air forces during the Korean War.

Vandenberg graduated from the U.S. Military Academy in 1923 and was commissioned as a second lieutenant. He was promoted to major in 1940, after 16 years of commissioned service.

As a field grade officer, Vandenberg's principal assignments were with the Air War Plans Division in the Office of the Chief of Air Corps and the Air Staff of Army Air Force Headquarters.

Vandenberg was promoted to brigadier general in 1942.

²Spaatz received a temporary, wartime promotion to major in June 1918. He reverted to captain in February 1920, was promoted to major again in July 1920, reverted to captain in December 1922, and was promoted to major for the last time in February 1923.

Army

The field grade experience for selected Army generals is shown in table V.1 and the biographical data for each general, including field grade experiences,¹ follow the table.

Table V.1: Field Grade Experience of Selected Army Generals

Average time in years			
	Officers who served in position	Average time	
		Officers who served in position	All officers
War-fighting assignments			
Key assignments			
Battalion executive officer	2	1.9	0.7
Battalion commander	4	2.9	1.9
Brigade commander	2	1.9	0.6
Total key assignments			3.2
Major war-fighting commands	5	1.6	1.3
Total war-fighting assignments			4.5
Non-war-fighting assignments			
Military service headquarters	6	3.5	3.5
Professional military education ^a	4	2.0	1.4
Non-war-fighting command	5	8.3	6.9
Total non-war-fighting assignments			11.8
Total field grade time			16.3

^aFour officers attended both an intermediate service school and a senior service school.

General Omar N. Bradley

General Bradley was the first chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and the first chairman of the Military Staff Committee of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. He commanded the II Corps in operations against Axis forces in North Africa and Sicily, and also commanded troops in the invasion and final campaigns of Western Europe.

After graduating from the U.S. Military Academy in 1915, Bradley was commissioned as a second lieutenant and assigned to the 14th Infantry Regiment. He was promoted to major² in 1918, after serving 3 years of commissioned service.

¹The biographical data on the field grade experience of all generals include their more extensive assignments. Assignments of short duration are generally omitted.

²Bradley was promoted to the temporary rank of major in June 1918; reverted to captain in January 1920; promoted to major again in July 1920; reverted to captain again in November 1922; and promoted to major for the third and final time in June 1924.

As a field grade officer, he commanded battalions of the 14th and 27th Infantry Regiments, served as an instructor at West Point and the Infantry School, and was Officer in Charge for National Guard Affairs at Fort Shafter, Hawaii. He graduated from the Command and General Staff School in 1929 and from the Army War College in 1934. He served on the General Staff of the War Department in Washington, D.C., from 1938-41.

Bradley was promoted to brigadier general in 1941.

General Mark W. Clark

During World War II, General Clark initially served as commander of the II Corps and then as commander of ground forces in the European Theater of Operations. In November 1942, he became Deputy Commander in Chief of forces landing in North Africa. He is best remembered as the commanding general of the 5th Army, which he commanded from January 1943 to November 1944. The 5th Army landed in Salerno, Italy, in September 1943 and captured Rome in June 1944. In November 1944, Clark became commander of the 15th Army Group, which served in Italy. The German forces in Italy surrendered to Clark in May 1945.

After graduating from the U.S. Military Academy, West Point, New York, Clark was appointed a second lieutenant in 1917. He was promoted to the rank of major in 1933, after 15 years of commissioned service.

As a field grade officer, Clark was initially an instructor for the Indiana National Guard. Then, he graduated in 1935 from the Command and General Staff School. He later became the Deputy Chief of Staff for the Civilian Conservation Corps in Omaha, Nebraska, until 1936. One year later, he graduated from the Army War College and was assigned to the command staff of the 3rd Division at Fort Lewis, Washington. Following his assignment as an instructor at the Army War College in 1940, he was designated Chief of Staff, Army Ground Forces, in Washington, D.C.

Clark was promoted to brigadier general in 1941.

General Dwight D. Eisenhower

During World War II, General Eisenhower was designated commanding general of the European Theater of Operations, and he commanded the American forces during the North African landings in 1942. Then, he became Commander in Chief for Allied operations in North Africa, Sicily, and Italy during 1942 and 1943. His final wartime assignment was

as Supreme Commander of the Allied Expeditionary Forces in Western Europe. In this capacity, he commanded the invasion of France, which resulted in the victory in Europe.

Eisenhower was commissioned as a second lieutenant after graduation from West Point in 1915. He was promoted to the rank of major in 1918, after 2 years of commissioned service.

As a field grade officer, Eisenhower initially served as commander of various Tank Corps units, executive officer of an Army camp, a member of the American Battle Monuments Commission, and a member of the staffs of the Secretary of War and the Chief of Staff. He graduated from the Command and General Staff School in 1926 and from the Army War College in 1928. Eisenhower was assistant to the military advisor of the Commonwealth of the Philippine Islands from 1935-40. After this assignment, he served as executive officer of the 15th Infantry Regiment at Fort Lewis, Washington, Chief of Staff of the 3rd Division at Fort Lewis, and finally, Chief of Staff of the 3rd Army, San Antonio, Texas.

In September 1941, Eisenhower was promoted to brigadier general.

General Douglas MacArthur

General MacArthur was recalled to active duty and named commander of the U.S. Army Forces in the Far East in July 1941. He subsequently led military forces in the Pacific as Supreme Allied Commander from 1942-45, and then, he was appointed Supreme Allied Commander, Japan. In 1950, MacArthur was appointed commander of the United Nations Command in the Far East that was organized to defend South Korea.

On June 11, 1903, MacArthur graduated at the head of his class from the U.S. Military Academy, and was commissioned as a second lieutenant. He was promoted to major in 1914, after 11 years of commissioned service.

As a field grade officer, MacArthur served as a member of the General Staff Corps until 1917. Then, he served as Chief of Staff of the 42nd Division in France during World War I.

In June 1918, MacArthur was promoted to brigadier general.

General George C. Marshall

General Marshall was Chief of Staff of the U.S. Army during World War II. From 1939-41, he directed the expansion of the U.S. military. In December 1944, he became the first General of the Army, a 5-star rank.

Marshall was commissioned as a second lieutenant in 1901 and served with the 30th Infantry Regiment in the Philippines. He was promoted to major in August 1917, after 16 years of commissioned service.

As a field grade officer, Marshall served as a staff officer with the American forces in France during World War I. From 1919-24, he was aide-de-camp to General John J. Pershing, Commander of the Allied Expeditionary Force and Army Chief of Staff. Marshall subsequently commanded the 15th Infantry Regiment in China, taught at the Army War College, and was assistant commandant of the Infantry School at Fort Benning, Georgia, until 1932. From 1933-36, Marshall commanded Army forts and Civilian Conservation Corps districts in Georgia and South Carolina and was senior instructor at the Illinois National Guard.

Marshall was promoted to brigadier general in October 1936.

General George S. Patton

General Patton is remembered for his dynamic leadership during World War II. He commanded American units landing on the west coast of North Africa in 1942. He became commanding general of the Western Task Force in 1943 and subsequently assumed command of all American forces in the Tunisian Combat Area. In Sicily he was the commanding general of the 7th Army until 1944. Then, he commanded the 3rd Army in France until the end of World War II.

A graduate of the U.S. Military Academy, Patton was commissioned as a second lieutenant on June 11, 1909. He was promoted to major in 1918, after 8 years of commissioned service.

As a field grade officer, Patton commanded a Tank Corps brigade in France during World War I and subsequently at Camp Meade, Maryland. He also commanded the 5th Cavalry Regiment at Fort Clark, Texas, and the 3rd Cavalry Regiment at Fort Myer, Virginia. He served as a staff officer for the Hawaiian Division, the Hawaiian Department, and the Office of the Chief of Cavalry. Patton graduated from the Command and General Staff School in 1924 and from the Army War College in 1932.

Patton was promoted to brigadier general in 1940.

Marine Corps

The field grade experience of Marine Corps officers is summarized in table VI.1 and the biographical data for each general, including field grade experiences,¹ follow the table.

Table VI.1: Field Grade Experience of Selected Marine Corps Generals

	Average time		
	Officers who served in position	Officers who served in position	All officers
Average time in years			
War-fighting assignments			
Key assignments			
Company commander	1	0.4	0.2
Battalion commander	1	1.8	0.9
Total key assignments			1.1
Major war-fighting commands	2	5.0	5.0
Total war-fighting assignments			6.1
Non-war-fighting assignments			
Military service headquarters	2	3.6	3.6
Professional military education ^a	2	1.3	1.3
Non-war-fighting commands	2	11.0	11.0
Total non-war-fighting assignments			15.9
Total field grade time			22.0

^aTwo officers attended an intermediate service school and one attended a senior service school.

General Holland M. Smith

General Smith led the Marine Corps to victory by island hopping across the Pacific during World War II. Sometimes called “the father of modern U.S. amphibious warfare,” he is regarded as one of America’s top commanders in the Pacific during World War II.

Smith was commissioned as a second lieutenant in the Marine Corps in 1905. He was promoted to major in May 1917, after 12 years of commissioned service.

As a field grade officer, Smith served in several positions with U.S. forces in France. He returned to the United States in 1919 and was assigned to the Office of Naval Operations in Washington, D.C., from 1921-23. He was designated Chief of Staff and Officer in Charge of Operations and Training of the Marine Corps in Haiti in 1924-25. Upon

¹The biographical data on the field grade experience of all generals include their more extensive assignments. Assignments of short duration are generally omitted.

returning to the United States, Smith became Chief of Staff of the 1st Marine Brigade and then Post Quartermaster at the Marine Barracks in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. In 1931, he served as aide to the Commander and Force Marine Officer of the Battle Force, U.S. Fleet. Then, he commanded the Marine Barracks in Washington, D.C., served as Chief of Staff of the Department of the Pacific, and in 1937, was the Director of the Division of Operations and Training in Marine Corps headquarters.

Smith was promoted to brigadier general in August 1939.

General Alexander A. Vandergrift

During World War II, General Vandergrift commanded the 1st Marine Division in the battle for Guadalcanal and the 1st Marine Amphibious Corps in the landing at Empress Augusta Bay, Bougainville. He became the 18th Commandant of the Marine Corps in 1944.

Vandergrift was commissioned as a second lieutenant in the Marine Corps on January 22, 1909. He was promoted to the rank of major in 1918, after 9 years of commissioned service.

As a field grade officer, Vandergrift was assigned as Inspector of Constabulary, Gendarmerie d'Haiti, Port au Prince, Haiti, from 1919-23. When he returned to the United States, he served as Post Athletic and Morale Officer at the Marine Barracks, Quantico, Virginia, until 1925. During 1927-28, Vandergrift commanded a battalion of the 4th Regiment, 3rd Marine Brigade, in China. He was Assistant Chief Coordinator, Bureau of the Budget, Washington, D.C., from 1929-33, and Assistant Chief of Staff, Marine Corps Expeditionary Force, Marine Barracks, Quantico, Virginia from 1933-35. He served as executive officer and then commanding officer of the Marine Detachment at the American Embassy in Peiping, China, until 1937. He was Secretary to the Commandant at Marine Corps headquarters until 1940.

Vandergrift was promoted to brigadier general in 1940.

Navy

The field grade experience of selected Navy admirals is shown in table VII.1 and the biographical data for each admiral, including field grade experiences,¹ follow the table.

Table VII.1: Field Grade Experience of Selected Navy Admirals

Average time in years			
	Officers who served in position	Average time	
		Officers who served in position	All officers
War-fighting assignments			
Key assignments			
Executive officer	3	1.2	0.9
Commander command ^a	4	2.6	2.6
Major command ^b	4	5.9	5.9
Total key assignments			9.4
Major war-fighting commands	3	3.8	2.9
Total war-fighting assignments			12.3
Non-war-fighting assignments			
Military service headquarters	4	3.5	3.5
Professional military education ^c	3	1.3	0.9
Non-war-fighting commands	4	3.6	3.6
Total non-war-fighting assignments			8.0
Total field grade time			20.3

^aCommand assignments at the grade of commander are referred to as commander command

^bCommand assignments at the grade of captain are referred to as major commands.

^cNone of the officers attended an intermediate service school and three attended a senior service school.

Admiral William F. Halsey

Admiral Halsey led carrier strikes against the Japanese during the early part of World War II, and later commanded the amphibious campaign in the South Pacific. He also commanded the 3rd Fleet, which was the key combat force in the Pacific during World War II.

After graduating from the Naval Academy in 1904, Halsey served 2 years at sea before being commissioned as an ensign in 1906. He was promoted to lieutenant commander in 1916, after 10 years of commissioned service.

¹The biographical data on the field grade experience of all admirals include their more extensive assignments. Assignments of short duration are generally omitted.

His first assignment as a field grade officer was in the executive department at the Naval Academy. During and after World War I, he commanded the destroyers Benham and Shaw. In 1921, he was assigned to the Office of Naval Intelligence in Washington, D.C., then he served as a naval attache in U.S. embassies in Europe. From 1924-32, Halsey served as commanding officer of the destroyers Dale and Osborne, executive officer of the battleship Wyoming, commanding officer of the station ship Reina Mercedes at the Naval Academy, and commanding officer of Destroyer Squadron 3. From 1932-35, Halsey attended both the Naval War College and the Army War College, served in a Navy recruiting bureau, and completed flight training. Then, he commanded the aircraft carrier Saratoga until he became commandant of the Naval Air Station, Pensacola, Florida, in 1937.

Halsey was promoted to rear admiral in 1938.

Admiral Ernest J. King

Admiral King served concurrently as Commander in Chief of the U.S. Fleet and Chief of Naval Operations during World War II. He exercised complete military control of the naval forces of the Navy, Marine Corps, and Coast Guard, and directed all activities of these forces in conjunction with the U.S. Army and the Allies.

After graduating from the Naval Academy, King served 2 years at sea before being commissioned as an ensign in June 1903. He was promoted to lieutenant commander in July 1913, after 10 years of commissioned service.

As a field grade officer, King was commanding officer of the destroyers Terry and Cassin, and commanded the 6th Division of the Torpedo Flotilla, Atlantic Fleet, until 1915. The next several years were spent in command staff positions of the Atlantic Fleet. From 1919-21, he was head of the post graduate department at the Naval Academy. Then, he commanded the cargo ship Bridge, Submarine Divisions 11 and 3, the Submarine Base at New London, Connecticut, and the aircraft tender Wright. King completed flight training in 1927 and subsequently commanded the Naval Air Station at Norfolk, Virginia, and the aircraft carrier Lexington. He graduated from the Naval War College in 1933.

King was promoted to rear admiral in 1933.

Admiral William D. Leahy

Admiral Leahy was recalled to active duty during World War II as Chief of Staff to the President to serve as a liaison between the political leadership and the military. He was also chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

After graduating from the Naval Academy in June 1897, Leahy served 2 years at sea and was commissioned as an ensign on July 1, 1899. He was promoted to lieutenant commander in 1909, after 10 years of commissioned service.

As a field grade officer, Leahy served as navigator and ordnance officer on the armored cruiser California and as fleet ordnance officer for the Pacific Fleet from 1909-12. Then, he held various positions in the Navy Department from 1912-15. After commanding the despatch gunboat Dolphin and serving as executive officer of the battleship Nevada, he was a director in the Navy Department from 1918-21. He also commanded the cruisers Chatanooga and Saint Louis, Mine Squadron 1, a Control Force of the Atlantic Fleet, and another tour of duty in the Navy Department as division director from 1923-26. His last field grade assignment was commanding officer of the battleship New Mexico.

Leahy was promoted to rear admiral in 1927.

Admiral Chester W. Nimitz

Admiral Nimitz was Commander in Chief of the Pacific Fleet. At a critical period during World War II, Nimitz assumed command and, despite the losses at Pearl Harbor and the shortage of vessels, planes, and supplies, organized his forces and carried on defensive warfare that halted the Japanese advance. He shifted from defensive to offensive warfare, and his leadership and skill as a strategist enabled units under his command to defeat the enemy in the Coral Sea, off Midway, and in the Solomon Islands, and to capture and occupy the Gilbert and Marshall Islands.

After graduating from the Naval Academy in 1905, Nimitz spent 2 years at sea before being commissioned as an ensign in 1907. He was promoted to lieutenant commander in 1916, after 9 years of commissioned service.

As a field grade officer, Nimitz initially served as executive officer on the tanker ship Maumee. During World War I, he was a staff officer of the Submarine Force of the Atlantic Fleet. After a tour of duty at the Office of the Chief of Naval Operations, Nimitz was executive officer of

the battleship South Carolina until 1920. Next, he commanded Submarine Division 14 at Pearl Harbor and attended the Naval War College. After graduating in 1923, Nimitz was a staff officer to the Battle Fleet Commander and the U.S. Fleet Commander in Chief. He served in the Naval Reserve Officers Training Corps at the University of California from 1926-29. He also commanded Submarine Divisions 20 and 12, the destroyer Rigel, and the heavy cruiser Augusta. Finally, he was assigned to the Bureau of Navigation in the Navy Department from 1935-38.

Nimitz was promoted to rear admiral in June 1938.

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