



Edward Gueritz

Edward Findlay "Teddy" Gueritz was born on 8 September 1919. His father, Elton Laurence Gueritz, was an officer of the Colonial Service, who was based in Africa, and later retired to Cheltenham, and died at the age of 46 in 1931. Edward Gueritz entered Cheltenham College in 1933 as an exhibitioner. On leaving school he joined the Royal Navy as a special entry cadet in 1937. On the 13th April 1938 Gueritz was appointed to HMS Ramillies and promoted to midshipman on 26 April 1938 (with seniority from 1 May). Soon after the outbreak of the Second World War he was a midshipman on the cruiser HMS Cumberland. After the Battle of the River Plate, HMS Cumberland rejoined the squadron commanded by Commodore Henry Harwood in the blockade which resulted in the scuttling of the German pocket battleship Admiral graf Spee. HMS Cumberland had been part of the group hunting the raider, but was refitting in the Falklands Islands at the time of the battle. On D-Day, 6 June 1944, Gueritz went ashore on Sword Beach at 0800 as the third most senior member of the beachmaster party. Lieutenant-Commander Gueritz was the Principal Beachmaster on Sword Beach from early on D-Day until he was wounded on June 26. His role was a key one, directing landings and movement on the beach following the initial assault and during the build-up of forces which followed, on which the momentum of the campaign depended. The success of the Sword Beach landings owed a great deal to his skill and courage as was recognised by the award of a Bar to his DSC. Gueritz was already a veteran of amphibious operations before D-Day, acting as Beachmaster at the Madagascar landings in 1942 for which he received his first DSC. (Postwar he made it a trio of landings, this time as Beachmaster for the Port Said landings during the Suez campaign.) After the war he became second in command of HMS Saumarez, and it was due to the damage control procedures that he put in place that the ship was not lost during the Corfu Channel incident in 1946. Later still he served on the staff of General Sir Hugh Stockwell during the Suez Crisis of 1956 as Beachmaster for the Port Said landings. During a long and distinguished naval career he was Admiral-President of the Royal Naval College at Dartmouth from 1968 to 1970. Sadly, Rear Admiral Edward (Teddy) Gueritz passed away on the 21st December 2008.