

LIEUTENANT COMMANDER WILLIAM M. FELLERS
UNITED STATES NAVY, DECEASED

NAVAL HISTORY DIVISION

William Machen Fellers was born in Macon, Georgia, on March 26, 1889, son of W. F. C. and Lily (McCarrel) Fellers. He entered the U. S. Naval Reserve Force in the rank of Lieutenant (jg) on March 28, 1918, and was transferred to the U. S. Navy in the rank of Lieutenant on November 29, 1921. Promoted to Lieutenant Commander on June 30, 1931, he was transferred to the Retired List of the Navy in that rank on August 1, 1936, by reason of physical disability incurred in the service.

Upon reporting to the Naval Air Station, Pensacola, Florida, for active duty in March 1918, he remained there briefly, and in April was transferred to the Naval Air Station, Hampton Roads, Virginia. He was on duty there during the remaining months of the war and until February 1919. He was awarded the Navy Cross and cited: "For extraordinary heroism as an observer in a seaplane which was being utilized for the test of a new method of aerodynamic control. Realizing the pilot was practically helpless to control the machine, he nevertheless accompanied the pilot into the air and they continued the experiment in order that the test might be complete."

Ordered to the Naval Air Station, Pensacola, he was detached in March 1919, and returned to Hampton Roads to serve until June 1920. He next had a three-year tour of duty at the Naval Aircraft Factory, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, and detached in May 1923, had a month's assignment in the Bureau of Aeronautics, Navy Department, Washington, D. C. He assisted in fitting out the USS RICHMOND at the William Cramp and Sons Shipbuilding Company, Philadelphia, and in November returned to the Naval Aircraft Factory there. From December 1923 until May 1924 he again served in the Bureau of Aeronautics.

Ordered to the U. S. Fleet, he reported aboard the flagship, USS SEATTLE, in which he served on the staff of the Commander in Chief, on the East Coast, until November 1924. A month later he was ordered to the Battle Fleet, joining the USS CALIFORNIA, flagship, at San Francisco. He served briefly on the Staff of the Commander in Chief, Battle Fleet, and in February 1925 reported to the USS MISSISSIPPI, a unit of Division 4, Battle Fleet. He was detached to the Bureau of Aeronautics, Navy Department, where he remained for the next five years.

In September 1930 he was ordered to duty afloat, and served until July 1931 as Aide and Flag Secretary on the staff of Commander Aircraft Squadrons, Scouting Fleet, attached to the USS WRIGHT. During the period August 1931 to July 1935, he was Inspector of Naval Aircraft at the Chance-Vought Corporation, Hartford, Connecticut. His last assignment in the Navy was at the Naval Aircraft Factory, Philadelphia, from August 1935 to May 1936, when he was relieved of all active duty pending his retirement on August 1, 1936.

Lieutenant Commander Fellers died on April 9, 1953, in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania,

He was buried at Arlington National Cemetery on April 14, 1953.

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