

VICE ADMIRAL WALTER STRATTON ANDERSON, U.S. NAVY (RETIRED)

Vice Admiral Walter Stratton Anderson, son of William E. P. Anderson and Nellie Douglas Hamilton, was born in Carlinville, Illinois, October 4, 1881. Before being appointed to the United States Naval Academy from the State of Illinois in 1899, he attended the Carlinville High School and Blackburn College, Carlinville, Illinois.

Vice Admiral Anderson was captain of the baseball team at Annapolis and served as Cadet Lieutenant Commander in 1902-1903, the last year the Midshipmen were organized in one battalion. He graduated "with distinction" in 1903, receiving his diploma from the hand of President Theodore Roosevelt. In compliance with existing law, he then served two years at sea before being commissioned Ensign. During this period he served aboard the U.S.S. BROOKLYN, flagship of the European Squadron, and cruised in the U.S.S. BROOKLYN in the Mediterranean and to South African and South American ports. In February 1905 he was commissioned Ensign.

In June of 1905, Vice Admiral Anderson was transferred to the U.S.S. GALVESTON and was in her when she formed part of the squadron sent under command of Rear Admiral Charles D. Sigsbee, U.S.N., to bring the body of John Paul Jones from France to the United States for interment in the crypt under the Naval Academy Chapel. Upon this occasion, Vice Admiral Anderson (then in the grade of Ensign) commanded the GALVESTON's company in the battalion sent to Paris from the United States ships. At that time, he marched with the first foreign troops seen on the streets of Paris since 1870. In August 1905, the GALVESTON started a cruise through the West Indies, carrying Minister Plenipotentiary Hollander, representative of the State Department.

From December 1905 until May 1907, Vice Admiral Anderson had postgraduate instruction in ordnance at the Bureau of Ordnance, Navy Department, Washington, D.C., at the Washington Navy Yard, and at the plants of various private industries. His next duty was on Asiatic Station where he served as aide and flag secretary to Rear Admiral Joseph N. Hemphill, U.S.N., Commander, Third Squadron, Pacific Fleet. He was promoted to lieutenant, both grades, in February 1908. In November of that year he joined the U.S.S. NEBRASKA at Manila, Philippine Islands, and made the remainder of the cruise around the world with the Battle Fleet. He was a member of the U.S.S. NEBRASKA baseball team, winner of the Fleet Championship. He was ordered to the Naval Torpedo Station, Newport, Rhode Island, in November 1909, and during two years of duty there worked with torpedoes, mines, and

explosives, and organized the planning and stock records departments. He conducted tests on TNT before the Navy adopted that explosive for use in mines and torpedoes.

Vice Admiral Anderson (then in the grade of Lieutenant), in December 1911, assumed command of the U.S.S. YANKTON, the Commander in Chief's dispatch boat and small relief flagship. Following that duty, he served as aide and flag lieutenant on the staff of Rear Admiral Hugo Osterhaus, U.S.N., Commander in Chief, Atlantic Fleet, from April 1912 until January 1913. After six months in the U.S.S. UTAH, he joined the U.S.S. DES MOINES in June 1913, serving as her executive officer until December 1914. During that tour of duty he served in the West Indies and was under fire when the Santo Dominican troops attacked Samana, which was held by the rebels. He also served in the U.S.S. DES MOINES during the Mexican Campaign of 1914, being at Tampico with Admiral Mayo at its inception. His next duty was Ordnance Superintendent in the Navy Yard, New York, New York. While in that detail, he supervised ordnance work on all classes of ships, including the installation on battleships of the earliest director fire systems.

In May 1916, Vice Admiral Anderson was assigned duty in connection with fitting out the U.S.S. ARIZONA. Promoted to Lieutenant Commander, August 29, 1916, he served in the ARIZONA from her commissioning in October 1916, until November 1919, first as gunnery officer, later as executive officer. He was promoted to the grade of Commander while serving in the ARIZONA, and was her executive officer when she was ordered abroad in November 1918 when she cruised out to sea from Portland, England, to meet the U.S.S. GEORGE WASHINGTON, with President Wilson aboard, and escorted that transport to Brest, France. He was still in the ARIZONA when she was reviewed in the North River, New York, with the rest of the Atlantic Fleet, by Secretary of the Navy, Josephus Daniels and other cabinet members and Fleet Commanders, and when, prior to that, she cruised in European waters in the spring of 1919 and visited Smyrna, Asia Minor, and Constantinople (the first visit of a United States battleship to that city) On that cruise he was present when the Greeks took Smyrna.

Vice Admiral Anderson was Officer in Charge of the Navy Recruiting Bureau, New York, New York, from November 1919 until November 1920. That was a large printing establishment, moving picture and photographic exchange, employed in publicizing the Navy and inspiring the large number of needed enlistments following World War I's demobilization. He completed the senior

course at the Naval War College, Newport, Rhode Island, in 1921, his diploma being presented by Admiral W. S. Sims, U.S.N.

In Washington, D.C., on Christmas Day 1921, Vice Admiral Anderson (then in the rank of Commander) stopped a runaway horse attached to a brougham. The coachman had been knocked off the vehicle by collision with a street car. The occupant of the brougham, an elderly woman, was in grave danger of losing her life. For that act, Vice Admiral Anderson received a Letter of Commendation from the Secretary of the Navy.

Vice Admiral Anderson had command of the U.S.S. SINCLAIR, and later of the U.S.S. KIDDER, with duty also as Commander, - Divisions 30 and 34, Destroyer Squadrons, Pacific Fleet, 1922-24. He was head of the Department of Ordnance and Gunnery at the Naval Academy, Annapolis, Maryland, from July 1924 until July 1927, and in addition organized the first of all Naval Reserve Officer's Training Corps Units which was at St. John's College, Annapolis, Maryland.

With the rank of Captain, Vice Admiral Anderson served as assistant chief of staff and operations officer to Admiral H. A. Wiley, U.S.N., Commander in Chief, U.S. Fleet, from August 1927 until May 1929. For one year thereafter he was Supervisor of New York Harbor. He served as Officer in Charge of the Naval Ammunition Depot, Hingham, Massachusetts, from May 1930 until December 1931.

Vice Admiral Anderson had command of the U.S.S. WEST VIRGINIA during 1932 and 1933. The WEST VIRGINIA won the battle efficiency pennant for the entire time of his command, a record that stands unique for a battleship and for a Captain. For this he received a Letter of Commendation from the President of the United States.

Vice Admiral Anderson served as Naval Attache at the American Embassy, London, England, from March 1934 until February 1937, and was promoted to Rear Admiral in July 1936 while in that duty. The period spent in London covered the 25th Anniversary Jubilee of George V, the death of that monarch, the abdication of Edward VIII; and the London Naval Conference of 1935-1936, which Vice Admiral Anderson attended as a member of the American Delegation. After his return to the United States, he assumed command of (heavy) Cruiser Division 4, Scouting Force, U.S.S. NORTHAMPTON flagship. During that tour of duty, he commanded various fleet task forces. He was also the first flag officer of the U. S. Navy to visit Bogota, Colombia. He received the thanks of the Colombian Government for services rendered upon that occasion.

From June 1939 until December 1940, Vice Admiral Anderson was Director of the Office of Naval Intelligence, Navy Department, Washington, D. C. While in that detail he greatly enlarged the Naval Intelligence Service in preparation for war. Also, while in that detail, he reported personally and daily to President Franklin D. Roosevelt for a considerable period and served, by the President's order, as a member of a special intelligence committee along with the Director of Military Intelligence and the Director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

In January 1941, Vice Admiral Anderson assumed command of Battleships, Battle Force, and Battleships Division 4. In April 1942 the designation of that command was changed to Battleships, Pacific Fleet, with Vice Admiral Anderson having additional duty as Commander, Battleship Division 4. During that tour of duty, he commanded numerous task forces of the Pacific Fleet, and during that critical period of threatening hostilities, large numbers of officers and men were trained and transferred to new construction while continuously exercising and conducting target practices to increase the efficiency of the command itself. Flying his flag in the U.S.S. MARYLAND, he was present at Pearl Harbor, T. H., when the Japanese attacked on December 7, 1941.

On September 28, 1942, Vice Admiral Anderson reported for duty as President of the Board of Inspection and Survey, Navy Department, Washington, D. C. That board, under his presidency, with its Pacific Coast Section and numerous other subordinate boards, was responsible for the preliminary trial, inspection, and acceptance of all vessels and aircraft for use by the Navy. During the period of his presidency of the Board of Inspection and Survey, from September 1942 until July 1944, more vessels and aircraft were added to the Navy than in any other equal period in our history.

On July 17, 1944, Vice Admiral Anderson assumed duty as Commander, Gulf Sea Frontier, and Commandant, Seventh Naval District, with headquarters in Miami, Florida. As Commander of the Gulf Sea Frontier, Vice Admiral Anderson collaborated with the Cuban and Mexican Navies, and with the Royal Air Force in the Bahamas for cooperative operations in the waters of the Gulf Sea Frontier. In that command he was responsible for the supervision and general direction, in its operational capacity, of the United States Naval Mission to Cuba, and of such vessels of the Cuban Navy as were placed under his general operational direction. On April 3, 1945, he was promoted to the rank of

Vice Admiral, and in May 1945, as Senior United States Naval Representative, in cooperation with the Senior United States Army officer designated for that purpose, he conducted staff conversations in Havana with the military and naval representatives of Cuba.

For his services as Commandant of the Seventh Naval District, and Commander, Gulf Sea Frontier, Vice Admiral Anderson was awarded the Legion of Merit with the following citation:

LEGION OF MERIT:

"For exceptionally meritorious conduct in the performance of outstanding services to the Government of the United States as Commandant, Seventh Naval District and as Commander Gulf Sea Frontier from July 1944 to October 1945. An administrator of unusual ability, he accomplished close coordination of the manifold activities of his dual command, and by the exercise of unlimited energy, skill and tact obtained a singularly high degree of success in their operations. He performed his duties during the above period with unusual loyalty, perseverance and zeal, and his achievements contributed significantly to the successful prosecution of the war."

On October 24, 1945, Vice Admiral Anderson was detached as Commander Gulf Sea Frontier and Commandant, Seventh Naval District. He retired on March 1, 1946.

In addition to the Legion of Merit, Vice Admiral Anderson has the Navy and Marine Corps Medal (awarded in 1944 for heroism in 1921 for which he had previously received a Letter of Commendation from the Secretary of the Navy), the Navy Expeditionary Medal, the Mexican Service Medal, the Second Nicaraguan Campaign Medal, the Victory Medal, Atlantic Fleet Clasp, and is entitled to the American Defense Service Medal, Fleet Clasp, the Asiatic-Pacific Area Campaign Medal, the American Area Campaign Medal, and the World War II Victory Medal. He also has the King George V Silver Jubilee Medal (British), the Cuban Order of Naval Merit, First Class, with White Ribbon, and the Haakon VII Liberation Cross (Norway).

Vice Admiral Anderson is the author of various articles and reviews published principally in the U.S. Naval Institute, among which are the following:

"Indirect Fire for Naval Guns" - January 1921

"The Dardanelles Campaign" - July 1923

"Limitation of Naval Armament" (First Honorable Mention in 1926)  
March 1926

"Is Hong Kong Limited by the Washington Treaty?" - August 1926  
"Submarines and Disarmament Conferences" - January 1927

Vice Admiral Anderson belongs to the following clubs: Army and Navy Club, Washington, D.C.; Army and Navy Country Club, Washington, D.C.; Army and Navy Club, Manila, P.I.; Chevy Chase Club, Chevy Chase, Maryland; New York Yacht Club, New York, New York.

Vice Admiral Anderson held national ranking in tennis in 1915 and 1920, and is a former Army and Navy Champion in doubles. As Commander and Captain he coached and captained the Navy Leech Tennis Team for three years, for which the Navy won the Leech Cup in competition with the Army.

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14 January 1948.