Commander Carlson was born on August 31, 1911, at Tomahawk, Wisconsin. He enlisted in the U.S. Navy on March 5, 1929, but was discharged on June 16, 1931, to accept an appointment, at large, to the U.S. Naval Academy at Annapolis, Maryland. Graduated and commissioned Ensign on June 6, 1935, he advanced in grade to the rank of Commander to date from March 1, 1944.

Upon graduation from the Academy in 1935, Commander Carlson had duty until April 1936, in the battleship NEW YORK, after which he transferred to the USS SICARD. Continuing to serve in that assignment until July 1947, he was ordered to the Sixteenth Naval District Cavite, Philippine Islands, for cuty in the USS FOFE, operating with Destroyer Squadron FIVE. From October 1937 to December 1939, he had consecutive duty aboard the USS PAUL JONES, the USS STEWART, the USS GUAM and the USS LUZON.

Detached from the LUZON in December 1939, Commander Carlson joine the USS CONYNGHAM as Gunnery Officer in February 1940, and in October 1942, assumed the duties of Executive Officer. He remained aboard the CONYNGHAM, in the latter assignment, until August 1943, when he returned to the United States and reported in September 1943 for duty in the Office of the Chief of Naval Operations, Navy Department, Washington, D. C. During October and November 1945, he was under instruction at the Naval Mine Warfare School, Yorktown, Virginia, and various other places in the United States, after which he reported to the Commander, Mine Squadron ELEVEN. He was transferred to the staff of Commander, Minecraft, Pacific Fleet in January 1946, for a two months tour of duty.

Commander Carlson was Supervisor of Japanese minesweeping on the staff of Commander, Naval Activity, Japan, between March 1946 and July 1948, and thereafter had three months' temporary duty under instruction in sonar at San Diego, California. On October 15, 1948, he assumed command of the USS TURNER, his present assignment.

Commander Carlson has the China Service Medal, and is entitled to the American Defense Service Medal, Fleet Clasp; the American Area Campaign Medal; the Asiatic-Pacific Area Campaign Medal with one silver star (five engagements); the World War II Victory Medal; the Navy Occupation Service Medal, Asia Clasp and the Navy Expert Rifleman Medal.