

REAR ADMIRAL ARTHUR DE LANCEY AYRAULT
UNITED STATES NAVY, RETIRED

NAVAL HISTORY DIVISION

Arthur DeLancey Ayrault was born in Rye, New York, on August 15, 1901, son of Mrs. Elizabeth Wood Ayrault and the late Arthur DeLancey Ayrault. He attended Heathcote School in Harrison, New York, and Masse School in Bronxville, New York, before entering the U.S. Naval Academy, Annapolis, Maryland, in 1917. During the summer of 1918 he served as a midshipman in a battleship of the Atlantic Fleet. He graduated and was commissioned Ensign in June, 1920, with the Class of 1921, and thereafter advanced in rank to that of Captain to date from June 20, 1942. He was transferred to the Retired List of the Navy on July 1, 1950, and was promoted to the rank of Rear Admiral on the basis of combat awards.

Upon detachment from the Naval Academy in 1920, he served in the Gunnery Department of the USS ARIZONA, flagship of Division 4, Battle Fleet, on the west coast, until August, 1924. Thereafter for two years he was Navigator of the USS RAMAPO, with the Naval Transport Service. For five years he then served successively in the destroyers SELFRIDGE; MERVINE; WATERS; and TARBELL, as Executive Officer. He attended the Naval War College, Newport, Rhode Island, from June, 1931 for one year, and remained another year on the staff as Aide to the President of that college. During the period, 1933-1934, he was Aide and Flag Lieutenant on the staff of the Commander in Chief, U.S. Fleet, aboard the USS PENNSYLVANIA. In July, 1934 he transferred to duty in the USS PORTLAND, of Cruiser Division 6, Scouting Force, on the east coast.

Reporting to the Navy Department, Washington, D.C. in the summer of 1935, he served as Aide to the Chief of Naval Operations, and while so serving he was a member of the United States Delegation to the London Naval Limitation of Armaments Conference, 1935-1936. When detached, he was assigned to the Asiatic Fleet, and served a two year tour from the beginning of hostilities between Japan and China, 1937-1939. Returning to the west coast in the fall of 1939, he was assigned as Material Officer in the Puget Sound Naval Shipyard, Bremerton, Washington, and served in that duty until the spring of 1941.

He then joined the new battleship USS WASHINGTON, as Executive Officer. After the United States entered the war, she operated in the Atlantic, and was with the British Fleet against the TIRPITZ (German battleship), as well as in support of Russian convoys in the Atlantic. He was awarded the Bronze Star Medal, the citation stating in part: "For meritorious service as Executive Officer serving on board the USS WASHINGTON, Flagship of Task Force NINETY-NINE, during operations in the Northeastern Atlantic and Arctic Oceans, from April 4 to July 14, 1942. Inculcating in the Officers and men of the WASHINGTON his own high standards of performance, (he) maintained this formidable battleship at the peak of operational efficiency as she penetrated extreme northern waters to provide coverage for the Iceland-Murmansk convoys, including Convoy No. PQ-17. Undaunted by the persistent attempts of enemy German air, surface and submarine forces based in Norway to destroy the ships of the convoy, he exercised close control of all departments of the WASHINGTON and, by his cool courage, wise decision and selfless concern for the welfare of

" - of his ship and her company throughout a period of intensive combat activity, contributing substantially to the safe arrival in port of vast quantities of shipping vital to the Allied War Effort. ."

In the summer of 1942, the WASHINGTON joined the Pacific Fleet, participating in the Battle of Guadalcanal during the crucial action of November 13-14, 1942. He was awarded the Gold Star in lieu of a second Bronze Star Medal; the citation stating: "For meritorious service as Executive Officer of the USS WASHINGTON during action against a numerically superior force of Japanese battleships, cruisers and destroyers off the coast of Savo Island in the Solomons Group, the night of November 14-15, 1942. . . . By advising his commanding officer of approaching enemy torpedoes and continuously relaying vital information, he contributed materially to the destruction of several hostile ships . . ."

When detached from duty in the WASHINGTON, he served the next two years as Assistant Commandant for Logistics, Eighth Naval District New Orleans, Louisiana. For his services in that assignment, he received a Letter of Commendation with Ribbon from the Secretary of the Navy. Ordered to the Bethlehem Steel Company yard, San Francisco, California, early in 1945, where the light cruiser TUCSON was building, he had duty in connection with fitting her out, and assumed command upon her commissioning, February 3, 1945. Following a period of shakedown training, the ship joined the Fleet at Leyte, Philippine Islands, as a unit of Task Force 38, and thereafter operated with a fast carrier task group, under the Commander Third Fleet, from July 1 to August 15, 1945, the date on which Allied offensive operations against the Japanese Empire were suspended. She then operated off the coast of Honshu, supporting the initial phases of the occupation of Japan.

The Legion of Merit with combat distinguishing device "V," was awarded him "For exceptionally meritorious conduct . . . as a Task Group Commander and Commanding Officer of the USS TUCSON during operations against enemy Japanese forces in the vicinity of the Japanese Homeland from July 10 to August 14, 1945. . . . Captain Ayrault skillfully handled his ship on detached special missions involving great hazards and, during these missions, operated outside the range of effective support of any friendly forces. . . ."

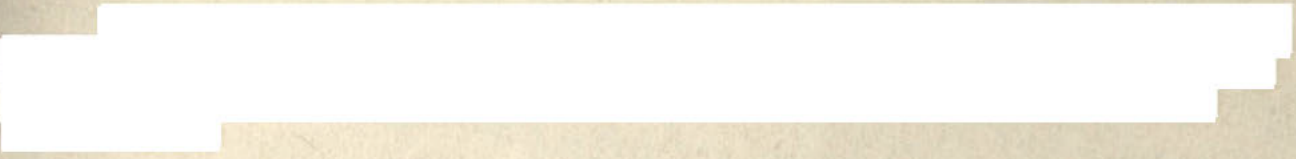
Returning to the States in time to participate in the Navy Day festivities on October 27, 1945, the TUCSON was host to over 18,000 visitors at San Pedro that day. Relieved of command of the TUCSON on January 30, 1946, he reported shortly after as Assistant Chief of Staff for Personnel, 13th Naval District, Seattle, Washington, and served as Director of Naval Reserves. In January, 1949 he was named Chief of Staff and Aide to the Commandant, 13th Naval District. He was so serving when relieved of active duty pending his retirement on July 1, 1950.

In addition to the Legion of Merit with "V," the Bronze Star Medal and Gold Star in lieu of a second Bronze Star Medal with "V", and the Commendation Ribbon, Rear Admiral Ayrault has the World War I Victory Medal, Atlantic Fleet Clasp; American Defense Service Medal Atlantic Fleet Clasp; American Campaign Medal; European-African-

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-Middle Eastern Campaign Medal; Asiatic-Pacific Campaign Medal; and
World War II Victory Medal.



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