

CAPTAIN RICHARD G. ALEXANDER, UNITED STATES NAVY

Richard Griffiss Alexander was born in San Diego, California, on August 1, 1922, son of Ralph C. and Elizabeth G. (Griffiss) Alexander. He entered the U. S. Naval Academy, Annapolis, Maryland, in 1941 on an appointment at large. Graduated with the Class of 1945 on June 7, 1944 (course of instruction reduced to three years due to World War II), he was commissioned Ensign. He subsequently advanced in rank, attaining that of Captain, to date from July 1, 1965.

Following graduation from the Naval Academy in 1944, he joined the USS CUSHING (DD-797) in which he served as Damage Control Officer, Assistant Gunnery Officer, and Navigator throughout the remaining period of World War II. Detached from that destroyer in March 1946, he transferred to the USS O'HARE (DD-889) to serve as Gunnery Officer, Executive Officer and Navigator. From September 1948 to May 1951 he had duty on board the USS WILLIAMSBURG (AGC-369), then became Gunnery Officer on the USS ROOKS (DD-804).

In October 1952 he was assigned to the Supervisor of Shipbuilding, Bath, Maine for duty in connection with fitting out the USS MITSCHER (DL-2), and served as Gunnery Officer in that frigate from her commissioning on May 15, 1953 until July 1954. He next had instruction (Command and Staff Course) at the Naval War College, Newport, Rhode Island, and in June 1955 reported for duty in the Bureau of Naval Personnel, Navy Department, Washington, D. C. From July 1957 to December 1958 he was Executive Officer of the USS JONAS INGRAM (DD-938), then became Commanding Officer of the USS HARTLEY (DE-1029).

He returned to the Naval War College in May 1960 to serve as Aide to the President of the War College. In July 1962 he reported for a month's instruction at the U. S. Navy Guided Missiles School, Dam Neck, Virginia, and the next month was assigned to the Avondale Shipyards, Westwego, Louisiana for duty in connection with fitting out the USS SEMMES (DDG-18). He assumed command of that guided missile destroyer on her commissioning in December 1962. "For outstanding performance of duty...from December 10, 1962 to June 12, 1964..." he was awarded the Navy Commendation Medal. The citation continues in part:

"Exercising a high degree of leadership, professional skill, and resourcefulness, (he) contributed in large measure to the success of SEMMES in achieving a remarkable Weapons Department performance and an unequalled record in guided missile firing successes, while concurrently exhibiting outstanding overall performance and a high state of readiness and training..."

He returned to the Bureau of Naval Personnel in July 1964 to serve first as Head of the Cruiser Destroyers Maincraft Placement Section, Officer Distribution Division, and later as Director of the Plans Division. On August 22, 1967 he was ordered to the Philadelphia (Pennsylvania) Naval Shipyard for duty as Prospective Commanding Officer in connection with the re-commissioning of the USS NEW JERSEY (BB-62).

In addition to the Navy Commendation Medal, Captain Alexander has the American Defense Service Medal; Asiatic-Pacific Campaign Medal with one silver and one bronze star (six engagements); American Campaign Medal; World War II Victory Medal; Navy Occupation Service Medal, Asia Clasp; National Defense Service Medal with bronze star; and the Philippine Liberation Ribbon with two bronze stars.

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