

REAR ADMIRAL CLARENCE EDWARD ALDRICH
UNITED STATES NAVY, RETIRED

Clarence Edward Aldrich was born in Chichester, New Hampshire, on August 24, 1899, a son of Mr. Albert M. Aldrich of Manchester, and Mrs. Myra Green (Aldrich) Smith of Pittsfield, New Hampshire. He was graduated from St. Albans (Vermont) High School, and entered the United States Naval Academy, Annapolis, Maryland, on July 19, 1917. While a midshipman he was at one time Editor in Chief of "The Log." He had World War I service in the summer of 1918 aboard a training vessel of the Atlantic Fleet. Graduated and commissioned Ensign on June 2, 1921, he subsequently attained the rank of Captain to date from June 21, 1942. Upon transferring to the Retired List of the Navy on July 1, 1951, he was advanced to Rear Admiral on the basis of combat awards.

After graduation from the Naval Academy in 1921, he served at sea until December, 1924, first in the battleship UTAH on European Station and for a year in the USS MAHAN, a unit of Division ONE, Mine Squadron, Control Force. In January, 1925 he reported for instruction at the Submarine School, New London, Connecticut, and completed the course in June. He joined the USS R-16 in August of that year, and commanded that submarine from May, 1927 to June, 1929. The next month he reported in the Office of the Chief of Naval Operations, Navy Department, Washington, D.C., and served one year in Naval Communications.

From June, 1931 until August, 1932 he served in the USS BARRACUDA, and in September joined the USS ARGONAUT as Executive Officer. Detached in May, 1934, he served from June, 1934 until October, 1936 at the Navy Yard, Portsmouth, New Hampshire. He placed the USS POLLACK in commission, and after a tour of two years in command of that submarine, he reported to the Submarine Base, Pearl Harbor, T.H. for duty as Executive Officer. In 1941 he became First Lieutenant and Damage Control Officer of the aircraft carrier YORKTOWN (CV 5), and as such participated in the Battle of the Coral Sea and the Battle of Midway.

"For meritorious service as Damage Control Officer of the USS YORKTOWN during action against enemy Japanese forces in the Solomon Islands Area, May 8, 1942 . . ." he was awarded a Gold Star in lieu of a second Bronze Star Medal with combat distinguishing device, V. The citation continues in part: "(He) rendered valuable assistance during and after the Battle of the Coral Sea in isolating and extinguishing a ranging fire on board, and in keeping damage to a minimum when his ship sustained a direct bomb hit and received many near misses. . ."

"For conspicuous gallantry and heroic devotion to duty . . . in the Battle of Midway, June 4 to 6, 1942," he was awarded the Silver Star Medal. The citation further states: "After a torpedo explosion extinguished all lights in the YORKTOWN and flooded his battle station, he furnished complete and accurate information to the Captain concerning damage control, and when ordered to abandon ship, calmly and efficiently directed the lowering of wounded to life rafts. . ." Hospitalized for injuries sustained in that engagement, he was awarded the Purple Heart Medal.

Returning to duty later in 1942, he joined the USS SANTA FE, and as her Executive Officer participated in the battles of Attu and Kiska,

Aleutian Islands. He returned to Pearl Harbor in September, 1943, and served for a year as Commanding Officer of the Submarine Base there. "For meritorious service" in that command from September 8, 1943 until October 13, 1944, he was awarded the Bronze Star Medal. The citation further states: "Performing his duties with untiring skill, (he) supervised the reconditioning of numerous submarines and . . . made notable contributions toward improving the effectiveness of our submarine forces during this period. . ."

He returned to the United States and completed the course at the Army-Navy Staff College, Washington, D.C., before reporting in June, 1945 for duty on the staff of Commander, South Pacific Force. He continued staff duty, from November, 1945 until June, 1947, serving successively with Commander Service Force, Pacific Fleet, and as Chief Staff Officer to Commander, Florida Group, Atlantic Reserve Fleet, at Green Cove Springs, Florida. In June, 1947 he was designated Commanding Officer of the Naval Station, Green Cove Springs. On March 29, 1950 he was ordered detached, and to duty as Commander, Naval Operating Base, Marianas, located at Guam. He served in that command until relieved of active duty pending his transfer at his own request to the Retired List of the Navy, effective July 1, 1951.

In addition to the Silver Star Medal, the Bronze Star Medal with Gold Star and Combat V, and the Purple Heart Medal, Rear Admiral Aldrich has the World War I Victory Medal, Atlantic Fleet Clasp; the American Defense Service Medal with bronze A; the American Campaign Medal; the Asiatic-Pacific Campaign Medal with four engagement stars; and the World War II Victory Medal.

He is a member of the Ponte Vedra Club, and the Cabul Lodge, F&AM, in Green Cove Springs, Florida.

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