

NAVAL HISTORY DIVISION

ADMIRAL LOUIS McC. NULTON
UNITED STATES NAVY, DECEASED

Louis McCoy Nulton was born on August 8, 1866, in Winchester, Virginia. He was appointed in 1885, to the U. S. Naval Academy, Annapolis, Maryland, from the Seventh District of his native state by the Honorable C. T. O. Ferrall. Graduated seventh in a class of thirty-five, on June 7, 1889, he served the two years at sea, then required by law, before he was commissioned Assistant Engineer, with the relative rank of Ensign, on July 1, 1891. He was promoted to Passed Assistant Engineer, with the accompanying rank of Lieutenant (junior grade), on October 19, 1896, and on March 3, 1899, he was advanced to Lieutenant. He subsequently attained the rank of Rear Admiral, to date from August 12, 1921, and served in the temporary ranks of Vice Admiral from June 26, 1928 to May 21, 1929, and Admiral from that date until June 16, 1930. Transferred on September 1, 1933 to the Retired List of the U. S. Navy, in his permanent rank of Rear Admiral, he was promoted to Admiral on the Retired List by Act of Congress, June 16, 1942.

Following graduation from the Naval Academy in 1889, he joined the USS CHICAGO, flagship of the "Squadron of Evolution" (ships constructed which marked the change from the old Navy to steam). He continued duty in the CHICAGO, operating on European Station, until July 1892, when he transferred to the USS CHARLESTON. While aboard her, he served as Aide to the Medical Officer of the landing party from the CHARLESTON ashore at Seoul, Korea, in July 1894. From August of that year until August 1895, he served in the USS PHILADELPHIA.

He was assigned to the Naval Academy until March 1898, interspersed with duty, between May and August 1896 in the practice ship BANCROFT. Continuous sea service followed in the USS ARETHUSA, the USS ABARENDA, the USS YOSEMITE, the USS CONCORD, the USS BALTIMORE, again in the CONCORD, the USS BENNINGTON and the USS NEW ORLEANS. He was aboard the latter, operating in the Caribbean area, during the Spanish American War. In June 1901 he joined the USS SCLACE, and in August of the same year was detached to report for brief instruction at the Naval Gun Factory, Navy Yard, Washington, D. C. Completing the course later that month, he was then ordered to the Navy Department, Washington, D. C., for duty in the Office of Naval Intelligence.

He joined the newly commissioned battleship TEXAS on November 4, 1902, and served in her until August 1905, when he was assigned to the Naval Academy, as an Instructor in the Department of Ordnance and Gunnery. Ordered, in April 1907, to the Norfolk Navy Yard, he had duty in connection with the recommissioning of the USS OLYMPIA, and when she was put into commission, May 15, 1907, he joined her as Executive Officer. Detached in August 1907, he had a brief assignment at the Naval Academy, and in November of that year reported as Executive Officer and Navigator of the USS PANTHER. Transferred, in June 1908, to the USS OHIO, he served as Ordnance Officer and later as Navigator until June 1909, after which he was attached to the USS WISCONSIN as Executive Officer.

Between May 1910 and June 1913 he headed the Department of Ordnance and Gunnery at the Naval Academy, and the following two months attended a course at the Naval War College, Newport, Rhode Island. In August he assumed command of the USS NASHVILLE, and from January 1914 to April 1915 commanded the USS MONTANA. Under his command the MONTANA operated with the Atlantic Fleet in Cuban waters, off Mexico and in the waters of Haiti. He was a member of the landing force ashore at Veracruz, Mexico in 1914, and at Haiti the same year.

In June 1915 he became Commandant of Midshipmen at the Naval Academy and in September 1918 he returned to sea as Commanding Officer of the USS PENNSYLVANIA. "For exceptionally meritorious service in a duty of great responsibility (during World War I) as Commandant of Midshipman ...and later as Commanding Officer, USS PENNSYLVANIA in the Atlantic Fleet" he was awarded the Navy Cross.

He was Commandant of the Fourth Naval District, with additional duty as Commandant of the Navy Yard, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, from September 1920 until June 1923, when he assumed command of Battleship Division THREE, Battle Fleet. After the completion of the long range battle practice, January 1925, he was detached from that command and during the period February of that year until June 1928 was Superintendent of the Naval Academy. He reported on June 26, 1928, in the rank of Vice Admiral, as Commander Battleship Divisions, Battle Fleet, and continued to serve as such until he was appointed Commander in Chief, Battle Fleet. He assumed that duty, in the rank of Admiral, on May 21, 1929.

Ordered to return to the United States, he reported on June 16, 1930, in his permanent rank of Rear Admiral, as Commandant of the First Naval District, with additional duty as Commandant of the Navy Yard, Boston, Massachusetts. He served in that capacity until relieved of active duty on June 30, 1933, pending his retirement on September 1, that year. Admiral Nulton died on November 11, 1954 in Maysville, Kentucky.

In addition to the Navy Cross, Admiral Nulton had the Spanish Campaign Medal (USS NEW ORLEANS); Philippine Campaign Medal (USS CONCORD and USS BENNINGTON); Mexican Service Medal (USS MONTANA); the Navy Expeditionary Medal (USS MONTANA); and the World War I Victory Medal. He has also been awarded the Order of the Crown (Grand Commander) by the Government of Roumania, and the Order of the Crown (rank of Commendatore) by the Italian Government (awarded for the occasion of the Balbo Flight --December 17, 1930 to January 15, 1931).

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