

Public Affairs Division
U. S. Coast Guard Headquarters
Washington, D. C., 20590

Biographical Sketch

REAR ADMIRAL HELMER S. PEARSON,
U. S. COAST GUARD
(RETIRED)

Helmer Sheppard Pearson was born on November 20, 1916, at Fairfield, Alabama, where he graduated from high school in 1933, following which he attended the Marion Military Institute at Marion, Ala.

He was graduated from the U. S. Coast Guard Academy, New London, Conn., with a B. S. Degree and was commissioned an Ensign on May 19, 1941.

Following brief stints as Watch Officer on board the Coast Guard Cutter MOJAVE and the troop transport USS HUNTER LIGGETT, he served as Gunnery Officer on board the Coast Guard combat Cutter CAMPBELL on convoy escort duty in the North Atlantic from September 1941 to January 1943, during World War II. In the fall of 1942, during that period, he was assigned temporarily to the Anti-Submarine Warfare School with the HMS OSPREY in Dunoon, Scotland.

After attending the Massachusetts Institute of Technology as a Radar student from January to July of 1943, he served for nine months as Radar and Anti-Submarine Warfare Instructor at the Coast Guard Training Station, St. Augustine, Fla. He then served as Executive Officer of the frigate BROWNSVILLE in the Pacific area for nine months. Following that duty he commanded Mobile Loran Detachments "H" and "G" in the Pacific from February 1945 until April 1946. During the next five months he served as Electronics Engineer at the 14th Coast Guard District office in Honolulu.

From September 1946 to May 1949, he was a student at Massachusetts Institute of Technology earning an M. S. Degree in Electronics Engineering-- in addition to serving for a period of time on detached duty with the Navy as a Radiation Laboratory research supervisor. That was followed by one year of duty as Electronics Systems Engineer in the Electronics Engineering Division at Coast Guard Headquarters, Washington, D. C.,

He next commanded the Electronics Engineering Station at Wildwood, N. J., from April 1950 to August 1953. He then commanded the Coast Guard cable layer Cutter YAMACRAW out of Boston, Mass., for a year and a half. In April 1955, he returned to the Electronics Engineering Division at Coast Guard Headquarters to serve as Assistant Chief for five years.

He commanded the Coast Guard Mediterranean Section office in Naples, Italy, from July 1960 to June 1963. During the following two years he commanded the Cutter DUANE on ocean station patrol and search and rescue in the North Atlantic out of Boston, Mass.

(more)

In June 1965, he was transferred to the 5th Coast Guard District office in Portsmouth, Va., where he first served as Chief, Engineering Division until August 1967 when he assumed the post of Chief, Operations Division. In July 1968, he reported at Coast Guard Headquarters, Washington, D. C., as Deputy Chief, Office of Engineering.

By nomination of the President on January 16, 1969, and approval of the Senate, the then Capt. Pearson was appointed a flag officer to rank as Rear Admiral from January 31, 1969. On August 1, 1969, Rear Admiral Pearson was designated Chief, Office of Engineering which he held for four and a half years. For superior performance of duty in that post, he was awarded the Meritorious Service Medal.

In July 1973, RADM Pearson became Commander, First Coast Guard District, Boston, Ma., his last tour of duty, for which he was awarded The Legion of Merit before his retirement on July 1, 1974.

RADM Pearson's World War II campaign service medals and ribbons include the following: American Defense with "A"; American Area; European-African-Middle Eastern Area; Asiatic-Pacific Area; and World War II Victory. He also has five Letters of Commendation and Appreciation, as well as the Meritorious Service Medal (Oct. 1972), and the Legion of Merit (April 1974).

Following is a resume of RADM Pearson's promotions in rank: Cadet, July 1937; Ensign, May 19, 1941; Lieutenant (jg), July 27, 1942; Lieutenant, May 15, 1943; Lt. Commander, July 20, 1945; Commander, May 19, 1953; Captain, February 1, 1962; Rear Admiral, January 31, 1969.

RADM Pearson holds memberships in the following organizations: Mason (F and AM), Excelsior Consistory (Scottish Rite), SNAME (Society of Naval Architects and Marine Engineers), ASNE (American Society of Naval Engineers), SAME (Society of American Military Engineers (he is a Past-President-1971)), Marine Technology Society, Propeller Club, and the National Defense Transportation Association.

RADM Pearson's wife is the former Nell Mae Mellott of McConnellsburg, Pa., a graduate of Thompson College, York, Pa. They have three children, Helmer S. Jr. (Sept. 3, 1946), Lynn S. (Sept. 30, 1947); and Clifford I. (Dec. 11, 1950).

#