

# Alan G. Kirk

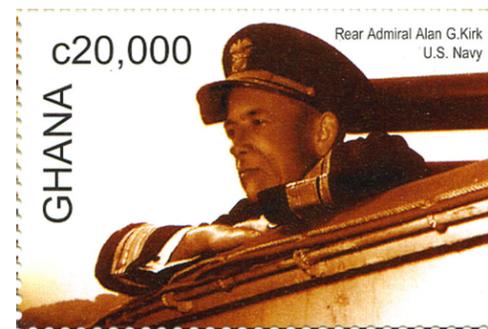
U.S. Admiral, ambassador ( 1888 – 1963 )



courtesy of The Naval Historical Center

Born in Philadelphia, Kirk graduated from the U.S. Naval Academy in 1909 and served in the U.S. Navy during both World Wars. During his service, he became the U.S. naval attaché in London (1939 to 1941). He was Director of the Office of Naval Intelligence from March 1941 but, obstructed and opposed by Rear Admiral Richmond Turner, he eventually requested a transfer to an Atlantic destroyer squadron.

Kirk served as an amphibious landings commander in the Mediterranean in 1942 and 1943 during the Allied invasions of Sicily and Italy. Critic JOHN MASON BROWN, who served under Kirk in 1943, wrote the following: "Our task force was two days out from America when the Admiral summoned me to the bridge. 'I want to talk to you about your battle station,' said he. 'You may have seen that you are listed as Bridge announcer. This means that I want you to be up here on the bridge during action and report it play-by-play to the men below. Only one man out of ten, you know, on a modern ship in combat can see what is going on. I want you to do their seeing for them. After all, this is a democratic war and I believe that men who are willing to give their lives for democracy have the right to be included in what's going on. Including them will be one of your duties.'"



Kirk was the senior U.S. naval commander during the Normandy landings of June 6, 1944 and was Commander U.S. Naval Forces, France during 1944 and 1945. He retired from the Navy in 1946.

At the request of DEAN ACHESON, Kirk subsequently served as U.S. Ambassador to Belgium, 1946-49 and as U.S. Envoy to Luxembourg during that period as well. He was named Ambassador to the Soviet Union from 1949-51, and was succeeded by GEORGE F. KENNAN. Kirk later served as Ambassador to Taiwan in 1962-63. For his work he received the Distinguished Service Medal Legion of Merit. Kirk was proposed to the club by Writer ERNEST ANGELL and Acheson. He died in Washington, D.C. and is buried in Arlington National Cemetery.