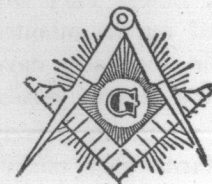


St. John's Lodge No. 2, A. F. & A. M.

honors

COMMODORE THOMAS MACDONOUGH



on the

150th Anniversary

of the

Battle of Lake Champlain

SEPTEMBER 12 - 13, 1964

MIDDLETOWN, CONNECTICUT

Macdonough the Mason

By James R. Case, Grand Historian

Along with several other naval heroes of the War of 1812-1814, Thomas Macdonough is taken and accepted as a Mason, although the lodge where he was made has not yet been ascertained.

Seafaring men traditionally may be made Masons wherever they happen to sojourn when circumstances and the ballot are favorable. Not a few sea captains were made in St. John's Lodge in Middletown in colonial times. They often sailed away and their names never appeared on the minutes again. Some never signed the by-laws. But in the early days, Masons were not required to become members of any particular lodge.

So it happens that up to the present time, strict search has not disclosed where Macdonough received his degrees. Born in Delaware, naval duties took him to Baltimore, Philadelphia, New York, Portland and Portsmouth, as well as shipbuilding yards in Middletown and on Lake Champlain. In none of these places has a record been found of the conferral of degrees.

An earlier conjecture that he was made in an English lodge at Malta while on duty in the Mediterranean is not acceptable in view of the conditions which prevailed on Malta during that period.

In Middletown, where he married and which he considered his home, Chapter and Council are distressingly silent. At his funeral St. John's Lodge turned out more than sixty strong to pay their final respects, which proves that he was one of the craft.

When Jeremy Ladd Cross, the famous Masonic lecturer, visited the Chapter in Middletown on March 20, 1818, he lectured on the degree and laid the ground work for the Council. He noted in his diary that he "had Commodore Macdonough as one of my hearers found him very plain sociable man."

Conspicuous as an example of Masonic patriotic and Christian virtues, Thomas Macdonough is one whom the fraternity is proud to claim and honor.

Commodore Thomas Macdonough



1783-1825

Forty-two years in the life of a man isn't considered too long a span. Yet the honor, devotion to duty, and love for his family which were exemplified in the life of Commodore Thomas Macdonough, placed his forty-two years on a plane many could well emulate.

The hero of the battle of Lake Champlain was born December 23, 1783 at "The Trap," St. George's Hundred, New Castle County, in Delaware. His father was an officer in the Revolutionary Army. Thomas Macdonough lived his first 17 years at St. George's Hundred, but in after years he seldom visited there. In 1804 the Navy assigned him to Middletown, Connecticut, and this became his home by adoption. For 21 years, despite his many far-away assignments, when he returned "home", it was to Middletown.

Macdonough's calling for the sea came early in life. In those days, before the institution of a naval academy, young men going into the young American Navy were assigned to warships as midshipmen. Macdonough's date of entry into this service was February 5, 1800, as his warrant signed by President John Adams, bears witness. The first foreign assignment for this future naval officer was to the West Indies.

It was his second assignment that took young Macdonough into Mediterranean waters, which would be closely related to the beginning and the ending of his career. At that time, the Barbary Powers were harassing American shipping along the northern coast of Africa, and great tributes of money were annually paid to avoid such interruptions. Four squadrons of American fighting ships were sent into that area to put a stop to this pirating, and it was to this squadron that Thomas Macdonough was assigned.

During the bombing of the Tripolitan Fort on October 13, 1803, the frigate Philadelphia ran aground, and was captured — the officers were made prisoners, and the crew were enslaved. Stephen Decatur devised a bold plan for the destruction of this captured vessel and on February 16, 1804, a party of 76 volunteers sailed alongside, surprising and killing all of the turbaned defenders, and setting fire to the Philadelphia. Thomas Macdonough was one of this valiant band of American sailors who succeeded in preventing this ship being used against our own shipping.

From his exploits in the destruction of this ship while lying at anchor under the guns of Tripoli, First Lieutenant Macdonough returned to this country a national hero, and Fate assigned him to his adopted town. In that year, 1804, he arrived in Middletown, Connecticut, as Assistant to Captain Isaac Hull, Superintendent of shipyard construction of four navy gun boats here. William Van Deason was the contractor, and James and Thomas Child were the builders. Macdonough very quickly accepted civil, religious, and social responsibilities and soon became a renowned and accepted citizen of the town.

The War of 1812, sometimes called the Second War of Independence, brought a quick turn to the lives of our people. In September of that year, Thomas Macdonough, now promoted to Captain, was ordered to Lake Champlain to command our naval forces there. This lake was a strategic water way, the control of which would block any troop movements down into New York City. Our navy forces there were hopelessly inadequate and the experience gained by Captain Macdonough in the shipyards here in Middletown was soon brought to bear on an extensive ship construction program.

Though his work was on Lake Champlain, the Captain's heart was in Middletown. For some years now, he had loved the beautiful Lucy Ann Shailer, whose home was on Main Street, on the present site of the Hartford National Bank and Trust Company.

The wedding of Captain Thomas Macdonough and Miss Lucy Ann Shailer took place on December 12, 1812, at Christ Church, which stood near what is now the South Green. The officiating Clergy were Right Reverend Abraham Jarvis and Reverend Doctor John Kewley. Henry Louis DeKoven was best man. Time was of the essence and the Captain couldn't tarry long from his appointed task. Their honeymoon route took them North to Burlington, Vermont, with a stopover at Pittsfield.

The two years that followed their marriage were filled with strenuous activity for the young navy officer and his bride. In the face of mounting pressure from British ship construction, Macdonough strove to match this strength. In a letter sent from Vergennes, Vermont, Lucy Ann writes to her mother, "If they know that I scarcely see him ten minutes in the day, and that he is soon going to sleep down at the vessels, they will find that his public duties are the first and nearly all of him."

The day of reckoning soon approached and the historic battle of Plattsburg took place on the morning of September 11, 1814. Though he faced superior British forces under the command of Commodore Downie, the tide of battle was turned by Macdonough through the strategic placement of his ships. Time and again the American ships could swing on their advantageous anchorage to bring to bear broadside shots from one side or the other. The entire naval engagement lasted two hours and twenty minutes, and the masterful planning, strategy and ability to maneuver his ships brought such a devastating destruction on the enemy, victory was assured Captain Macdonough and the American forces. The English Commodore Downie was killed in this action, and the British land forces retreated into Canada. All future offensive land actions against the struggling United States were abandoned.

This great victory elevated Macdonough to the rank of Commodore, and a high place in the annals of American Naval history. Yet, through it all, there were great personal sacrifices. Time and again duty prevented him from being near when his wife bore their children, or when one died. There were 10 children born to this marriage; five of them survived the early years of childhood.

Duty and future assignments took Commodore Macdonough to distant points. Mrs. Macdonough returned to Middletown to live at the Shailer homestead on Main Street; and her husband returned to be with her when time and duty permitted. It was during one of the Commodore's trips back home that a destructive hurricane struck this area on September 2, 1821. Great havoc was wrought and many, many beautiful trees along Main Street, and other streets, were uprooted and destroyed. The steeple on Christ Church, where he and Miss Lucy were married almost nine years before, toppled. Church authorities asked the Commodore to head a committee to view the destruction and to make recommendations as to the proper course to pursue. His committee viewed the damaged steeple and reported that it was their opinion that a steeple of lesser height should replace that which had fallen.

In all, they had less than thirteen years of married life, and most of the Commodore's time was spent at sea. Mrs. Macdonough's time was spent in coping with the birth and death of their children. It was never destined that theirs would be long lives. Mrs. Macdonough knew this herself, for on July 31, 1823, almost two years before her death, she wrote this in her letter to Mrs. Chew, a lifelong friend: "My health, which was partially restored by my journey, is again declining . . ."

Commodore Macdonough had now returned to the Mediterranean Sea in command of the fleet there — his flagship, "Old Ironsides". Lucy's mother, Mrs. Ann Shailer, always had a deep love for this great man who was married to her daughter. In her last letter to him she spoke of her fear for her daughter's health: "Lucy is thin and her spirits are not good." This letter was dated December 28, 1824. Eight months later Mrs. Macdonough died — her age was 35 years. The Commodore's health had been failing, too, and it became necessary for him to give up his command. His intention was to return to Middletown to be with his family, but his sickness and his heavy heart, caused by his wife's death, were too much for him. Three months later, on November 10, 1825, while his return ship was off Gibraltar, Commodore Macdonough died. On the arrival of his remains in New York, that great city deeply mourned the passing of this national hero, as did the country at large. Upon arrival in Middletown, the Lodge records bear this notation . . . "December 3, 1825, the lodge, Horace Clark, Master, and sixty-one others attended the funeral of Commodore Thomas Macdonough." It appears to have been a simple attendance, out of respect for the distinguished officer who was a Mason. At the Old Riverside Burial Ground he was laid to rest beside his wife, Lucy Ann, there to part no more, and their epitaph concludes:

"They were lovely and pleasant in their lives,
and in their death they are undivided."

Over the years Middletown has not been unmindful in keeping alive the name Macdonough. From 1853 to 1928, when the structure was demolished, the renowned Macdonough Hotel stood at the northwest corner of Main and Court Streets. A short, pleasant and shady street near the lower end of Main Street has been named Macdonough Place. One of our grammar schools is called Macdonough School, and a fine restaurant here in Middletown operates as "The Macdonough Inn."

Throughout the years, the United States Navy has honored this great hero by naming four ships "Macdonough." The keel for the first destroyer of this name was laid April 10, 1899; the keel for the second "Macdonough" was laid May 24, 1920; and the keel for the third destroyer bearing this famous name was laid May 15, 1933. Today, the seas carry the fourth Macdonough — a comparatively new destroyer leader, the DLG-8, commissioned November 4, 1961.

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Courtesy of

The Farmers and Mechanics Savings Bank

Commissioning



BOSTON NAVAL SHIPYARD
BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS

4 NOVEMBER 1961

NAVAL COMMISSIONING

The Commissioning Ceremony marks the initiation of service of a ship of the Operating Forces of the United States Navy. At the moment of breaking her commission pennant, USS MACDONOUGH (DLG-8) becomes the responsibility of her Commanding Officer, Commander William G. Hurley, USN, who, together with the ship's company, then has the duty of making and keeping her constantly ready for any service demanded by our country in peace or war.

COMMODORE THOMAS MACDONOUGH, USN

United States Ship **MACDONOUGH**

**GUIDED MISSILE FRIGATE
NUMBER EIGHT**



Built by
Bethlehem Steel Company
Quincy, Massachusetts

Keel Laid — 15 April 1958
Launched — 9 July 1959
Commissioned — 4 November 1961



SPONSOR
Mrs. Agnes McDonough Wilson
Great-granddaughter of Commodore Thomas Macdonough, USN



COMMODORE THOMAS MACDONOUGH, USN

1783 — 1825

COMMODORE THOMAS MACDONOUGH, USN



Thomas Macdonough was born 31 December 1783 at a hamlet called "The Trap" (now Macdonough), Delaware. He entered the Navy as a midshipman 5 February 1800 and cruised to the West Indies in GANGES. Ordered to CONSTELLATION in 1801 he cruised to the Mediterranean and upon returning was ordered to PHILADELPHIA in which he returned to the Mediterranean. As a member of a prize crew taking a captured vessel to Gibraltar, he escaped the fate of PHILADELPHIA's crew, which was imprisoned by the Tripolitans, and upon rejoining the squadron off Tripoli was ordered to ENTERPRISE. He became a close friend of his commanding officer, Stephen Decatur, and served with him in the daring dash into the harbor of Tripoli to burn the captured PHILADELPHIA. In 1805 he became First Lieutenant of ENTERPRISE and then of SIREN, in which he returned to America.

After duty assisting in the construction of gunboats and another sea tour in ESSEX, in 1809 he assumed command of all gunboats in Connecticut and Rhode Island. Following a furlough which was spent in the merchant service he was given command of the naval forces on Lake Champlain. During the winter season, he made preparations to engage the British, whose strategy was a southward thrust to connect with forces which would come north from New York, thus separating the New England states from the rest of the country. When the cruising season opened in 1814, Macdonough had 14 small vessels, chief of which was his flagship SARATOGA and many of which he had constructed. The British force, however, was superior in number and tonnage of ships, guns, and men. On 11 September 1814, the British began their push down the lake, vanguarding an army advance which was planned to sweep down the valley of the lake and into the Hudson Valley. Macdonough arrayed his ships in Plattsburg Bay thus forcing the British not only to engage them, but to confront the American ships with their bows first, subject to the raking fire of Macdonough's broadsides. Superior gun-handling along with skillful maneuvering enabled Macdonough to win a decisive victory. Immediately after the battle, Macdonough penned his victory message to the Secretary of the Navy saying, "The Almighty has been pleased to grant us a signal victory . . .", an inspiring message to the great leaders who have followed.

Macdonough was acclaimed by the American people, and honored by Congress with promotion to Captain, to rank from 11 September, date of this victory. He sailed to the Mediterranean in 1824 as commanding officer of the frigate CONSTITUTION, but his health was failing badly, and he was relieved 14 October 1825 at his own request. He took passage for home in the brig EDWIN, and died at sea 10 November 1825. A thoroughly religious man, he was generous and humane as he was skillful and brave; one of the greatest of our sea captains, he has left a stainless name behind him.

52
U. S. Saratoga, at anchor
off Plattsburgh Sept 13. 1814.

Sir,

By Lieut. Commr. Cassin. I have the honor
to convey to you the Flags of his Britannic Majes-
ty's late Squadron, captured on the 11th Inst. by the
United States Squadron under my Command.

Also my dispatches relating to that occurrence
which should have been in your possession at
an earlier period, but for the difficulty in arrang-
ing the different Statements.

The Squadron under my com-
mand now lies at Plattsburgh - it will bear
of considerable diminution, and leave a force
sufficient to repel any attempt of the Enemy in
this quarter. I shall wait your order

This historically significant document clearly picturizes the tough
moral fibre, devotion to duty, and the indomitable courage of the "iron"
men of our early Navy who served to fight in "wooden ships" -- and
from whom today's Navy, the most modern and powerful in the world,

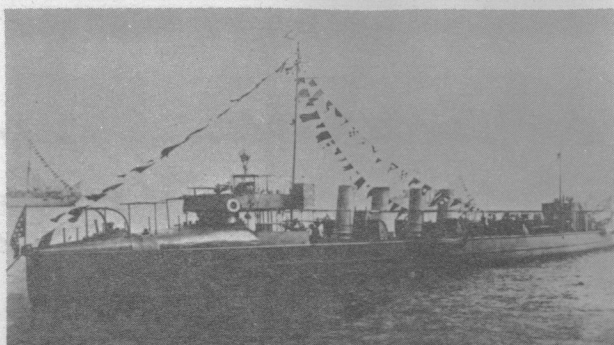
what to do with the whole or any part thereof.
and should it be consistent, I beg you will
favor me with permission to leave the Lake
and place me under the command of Commodore
Decatur at New York. My health, (being on
time on the Lake) together with the almost cer-
tain inactivity of future naval operations be-
are among the causes for the request of my
removal.

I have the honor to be, Sir
with much respect,

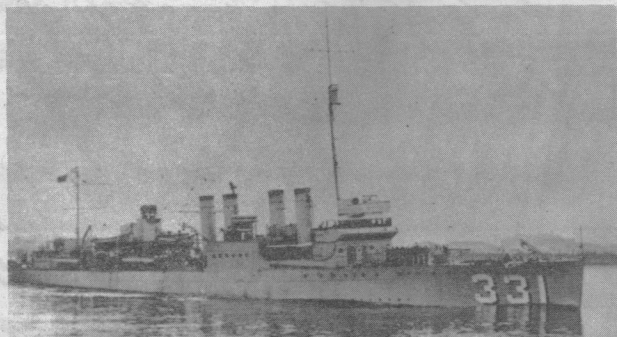
Yr. most obed^t Servant
Macdonough

Thos^d Wm Jones
Secretary of the Navy
Washington;

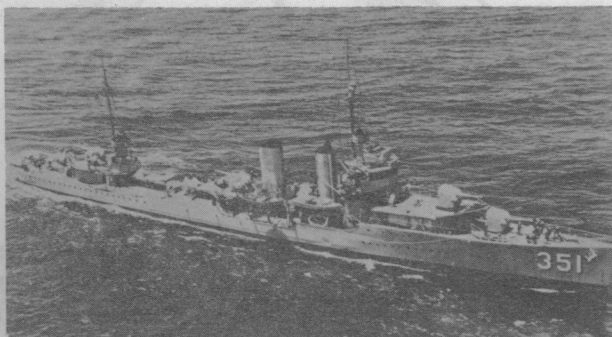
has inherited its glorious traditions. After this letter was written,
Commodore Macdonough went on to perform brilliantly through eleven
more years of valuable service to the country he loved so much.



THE FIRST USS MACDONOUGH (DD-9)
1903 - 1919



THE SECOND USS MACDONOUGH (DD-331)
1921 - 1930



THE THIRD USS MACDONOUGH (DD-351)
1935 - 1945

HISTORY OF PREVIOUS USS MACDONOUGHS

The first MACDONOUGH (DD-9) was a motor torpedo destroyer built by the Fore River Ship and Engine Company of Weymouth, Massachusetts and launched 24 December 1900. She was 246 feet long, displaced 430 tons, and had a design speed of 30 knots. Her complement was 3 officers and 69 men. Armament included two 3-inch guns; five 6-pounders; and two 18-inch torpedo tubes. MACDONOUGH took part in many fleet exercises in the Western Atlantic Ocean and the Caribbean Sea. She escorted President Calvin Coolidge to New Orleans in 1909 and transported the then Assistant Secretary of the Navy Franklin D. Roosevelt to Cuba in 1917. She was decommissioned in September 1919.

The second destroyer named MACDONOUGH, (DD-331), was built by the Bethlehem Shipbuilding Corporation in San Francisco, California. Launched 12 December 1920 and commissioned on 26 April 1921, she had an overall length of 314 feet with a displacement of 1190 tons and a designed speed of 35 knots. Six officers and 89 men were in the crew. Armament consisted of one 3-inch and four 4-inch guns plus twelve 21-inch torpedoes. Based in San Diego, California she participated in operations with Destroyer Division 76, U. S. Pacific Fleet and in 1925 made a goodwill cruise with the fleet to Australia and New Zealand. She was decommissioned 8 July 1930.

The third MACDONOUGH (DD-351), also a destroyer, was built by Boston Naval Shipyard and launched 22 August 1934. She was placed in commission 15 March 1935, moved to the Pacific Ocean, and was undergoing repairs in Pearl Harbor on 7 December 1941 during the Japanese attack. MACDONOUGH swung into action, blazing away at the attackers and never stopping throughout the duration of the war. She fought in company with the carriers LEXINGTON, YORKTOWN, and SARATOGA, took part in the invasion of Guadalcanal, and was a part of Rear Admiral Mitscher's famed Carrier Task Force FIFTY-EIGHT. With the assistance of another destroyer, the MACDONOUGH sank the Japanese Submarine I-174 on 4 May 1944. She also took part in the Battle of the Philippine Sea and the "Marianas Turkey Shoot". For her outstanding performance during the war, MACDONOUGH was awarded thirteen battle stars. She was decommissioned on 22 October 1945.



U. S. S. MACDONOUGH (DLG-8)

1961 —

STATISTICS

Length Overall:	513 ft.	Command Facilities:	Modular CIC with the latest and most modern communications and electronics installations.
Extreme Beam:	53 ft.	Armament:	TERRIER guided missiles. ASROC (rocket propelled antisubmarine weapons). ASW torpedoes. One 5-inch and two twin 3-inch guns.
Displacement:	5,600 tons		
Propulsion:	Twin Turbines, Twin Screws		
Speed:	Over 34 Knots		
Complement:	22 Officers 335 Enlisted personnel		

U. S. S. MACDONOUGH (DLG-8)



USS MACDONOUGH (DLG-8) is the fourth ship of the Fleet to bear the name and is named for Commodore Thomas Macdonough, USN, who on 11 September 1814 decisively defeated the British fleet on Lake Champlain and forced the retreat of British forces to Canada. Of this victory Sir Winston Churchill has said "the most decisive engagement of the war".

The keel of MACDONOUGH was laid on 15 April 1958 and she was christened on 9 July 1959 by Mrs. Agnes McDonough Wilson, a great-granddaughter of Commodore Macdonough. Built by the Quincy Yard of Bethlehem Steel Company this is the third ship of the DLG-9 class to be constructed by that yard.

MACDONOUGH is 513 feet long with a 53 foot beam. Draft is 24½ feet and full war load displacement is nearly 6000 tons — almost as much as World War II light cruisers. But she is still a fast, highly maneuverable destroyer, capable of effective antisubmarine and anti-air warfare and able to provide the protection so necessary to our mobile fast carrier striking forces. She carries the latest electronics equipment for long and short range rapid communications, for the control of aircraft in search and intercept, for target detection and tracking, and for accurately guiding rapid salvos of fast, highly-destructive missiles to strike enemy targets in the air, on the sea, under the sea, and on land.

MACDONOUGH is capable of extended operations in combat areas at high speeds with the support of fleet oilers and ammunition, provisions, and supply ships. All living and equipment control spaces are comfortably air-conditioned. The most modern laundry, food preparation and serving facilities have been provided. Besides, MACDONOUGH has beautiful lines and a bow configuration designed to prevent green water from deluging the ship except in the most severe storms at sea.