



Franklin Van Valkenburgh

WWII

Birth: April 5 1888; Hennepin County Minneapolis MN

Death: December 7 1941 - Pearl Harbor Hawaii

Service: U.S. Navy

Rank: Captain

Organization: U.S.S. Arizona

Burial Location: National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific



Early Years

Franklin Van Valkenburgh graduated from the U.S. Naval Academy, June 1909. In 1911-1914, he was with the Asiatic Squadron. Franklin served as an instructor at the Naval Academy intermittently 1920-1925.

The United States entry to WWI found Van Valkenburgh serving as the battleship's (USS Rhode Island) engineering officer. On June 1, 1920, Van Valkenburgh reported on board USS Minnesota for duty as engineer officer. He held that post until the battleship was decommissioned in November 1921. He again served as an instructor at the Naval Academy until May 15, 1925 before he joined the USS Maryland (BB-46) on June 26, 1925. *4



His postgraduate education was in the field of steam engineering, and during this time he served on the battleships Minnesota and Maryland. In 1928 he was assigned to the Office of the Chief of Naval Operations in Washington DC.

In the early 1930s, Franklin was Commander of the destroyer Talbot and destroyer Squadron Five. He was a student at the Naval War College and Inspector of Naval Material at the New York Navy Yard before again serving at sea during 1936-1938 as Commanding Officer of the destroyer Melville. Then he spent time ashore with the Third Naval District. In February 1941, Captain Van Valkenburgh became commanding officer of the battleship Arizona.

War Years

During the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, he was killed in action when his ship exploded and sank, December 7th, 1941. Franklin died when a direct bomb hit the ammunition magazines while he bravely tried to defend his ship.



Post War Years

A memorial was built above the sunken ship as an active U.S. Military Cemetery, with a shrine room listing the names of the lost crew members on a marble wall. Franklin's name is engraved on that wall.

Honors

Captain Franklin Van Valkenburgh received the Medal of Honor posthumously. The citation reads "For conspicuous devotion to duty, extraordinary courage and complete disregard of his own life".

In 1943, a destroyer USS Van Valkenburgh was named in his honor.



References

Source: First photo p.1 – U.S. Naval Historical Center

Wikipedia encyclopedia http://en.wikipedia.org/Franklin_Van_Valkenburgh