Two Navy Admirals

REAR ADMIRAL GERALD E. THOMAS
Assumes Rear Admiral Post

REAR ADMIRAL SAMUEL L. GRAVELY JR.
High Ranking Navy Officer

Gerald E. Thomas has become the second black admiral in the United States Navy, joining the pioneer black admiral Samuel Lee Gravely Jr.

Rear Admiral Thomas received his two-star shoulder board during a recent San Diego ceremony in which he was relieved as commander of Destroyer Squadron 9 by Capt. Frank C. Collins.

"I am proud of being black and proud of the Navy for letting minority group member rise to the top," Admiral Thomas said.

Rear Admiral Gravely of Richmond, Va., was named an admiral on June 2, 1971.

Rear Admiral Gravely, 52, was born in Richmond, Va. He attended Armstrong High School, and took a B.A. in history from Virginia Union University. While at the university, he enlisted in the U.S. Naval Reserve.

After his commissioning as Ensign, USNR in 1944, he rose through ranks from Battalion Commander at the Naval Training Center, Great Lakes, to Rear Admiral by 1972.

Gravely participated in action against enemy North Korean and Chinese Communist forces in the Korean area while serving as radio officer and in other capacities on board the USS IOWA and USS TOLEDO. He wears the Ribbon for the Korean Presidential Unit Citation for his distinguished service aboard the two ships.

Gravely became Commanding Officer of the destroyer USS THEODORE E. CHANDLER in 1961. Five years later, he became Commanding Officer of USS TAUSSIG, and by 1970, he assumed command of USS JOUETT, one of the most modern guided missile frigates.

Gerald Eustis Thomas was born in Natick, Massachusetts, on June 23, 1929, son of Walter and Leila (Jacobs) Thomas. He graduated from Natick High School, attended the University of Nebraska at Lincoln, for one year and in 1951 received the degree of bachelor of arts in Biochemical Sciences from Harvard University, Cambridge, Massachusetts.

While at Harvard, he was a member of the Naval Reserve Officers Training Corps Unit and upon graduation was commissioned Ensign on June 1, 1951. He subsequently advanced in rank to that of captain, to date from July 1, 1971. His selection for the rank of Rear Admiral was approved by the President on Jan. 30, 1974.

After receiving his commission in 1951, he joined the USS NEWMAN K. PERRY (DDR-883) and in October, 1951 was assigned to the Destroyer Force, U.S. Atlantic Fleet Engineering School, Newport, Rhode Island. In January, 1952 he rejoined the NEWMAN K. PERRY and in July, 1954 reported on board the USS WORCHESTER (CL-144).

While attached to that cruiser, he attended the Combat Information Center Watch Officer and Day Air Control School, Boston, Massachusetts. He had instruction in the Russian language at the Defense Language Institute, East Coast, Washington, D.C., from December, 1956 to September, 1957, where he qualified as a Russian interpreter, after which he served as the National Security Agency, Fort Meade, Maryland.

In June, 1960 he joined the USS LOWE (DER-325) as Executive Officer and in February, 1962 assumed command of the USS IMPERVIOUS (MSO-449), which operated in the Western Pacific. Assigned in July, 1963 to the Bureau of Naval Personnel, Navy Department, Washington, D.C., he was Head of the College Training Program Section.

He reported in July, 1965 for instruction at the Naval War College, Newport, Rhode Island and upon completing the course was selected as the Distinguished Graduate of the School of Naval Command and Staff for the 1965-66 Academic Year.

In August, 1966 he assumed command of the USS BAUSELL (DD-845) and "for meritorious service . . . from March 31 to October 15, 1967 during combat operations against the enemy . . " he was awarded the Navy Commendation Medal with Combat "V."

He reported in April, 1968 as executive officer of the first Naval Reserve Officers Training Corps Unit established at a predominantly Negro college, Prairie View (Texas) Agricultural and Mechanical College. He was awarded the Meritorious Service Medal.

In addition to the Meritorious Service Medal and the Navy Commendation Medal with Combat "V", Thomas has the Navy Occupation Service Medal, Europe Clasp; National Defense Service Medal with bronze star; Vietnam Service Medal with two stars and the Republic of Vietnam Campaign Medal with Device.

His home town address is Boston, Massachusetts. He is married to the former Rhoda Henderson of Boston and they have three children, Kenneth Austin, Steven Eric and Lisa Diane Thomas.

Opportunity For All Is Goal Of Defense Department

(Continued from Page 10)

Scott Air Force Base, Illinois.

General James, 54, became Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense (Public Affairs) on March 31, 1970 and was designated Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense (Public Affairs) on April 20, 1973.

A native of Pensacola, Florida, General James was commissioned in 1943. He flew 101 combat missions as a fighter pilot during the Korean War and 78 additional combat missions during the Vietnam conflict while serving as Director of Operations Training and later as vice wing commander of the 8th Tactical Fighter Wing.

Recently, Brig. Gen. Cunningham C. Bryant was named commanding general of the District of Columbia National Guard, making him the first black officer to head the Guard in Washington.

Gen. Bryant, 53, has served the guard since 1968 as adjutant general. He is a resident of Washington, D.C.; but a native of Clifton, Va.

Bryant's family moved to Washington, and he was graduated in 1940 from Cardozo High School, where he was cadet battalion commander of the National Defense Cadet Corps.

HE ENROLLED at Howard University as a civil engineering student and joined the ROTC. When World War II came, he was commissioned a second lieutenant.

Bryant was assigned to the 92nd Infantry Division in Italy, an anti-tank outfit. Later, he was appointed a company commander with the division's 317th Engineer Combat Battalion. Bryant served with the 317th until V-E Day, when he was blinded temporarily in both eyes by a mine explosion. He came home a captain in 1947.

Bryant served with several Army reserve units after a temporary absence from active duty. In 1954, he joined the D.C. Guard. In three years, he became a full-time Guard officer and was responsible for reorganization of a new Officer Candidate School. He later became the school's commandant.

He is married to the former Hyacinth F. Bowie and has two daughters. They live on D St., NE, a short distance from his third floor command post at the D.C. Armory.

Among the ranking Marine officers is Colonel Kenneth H. Berthoud Jr., who is head of the Logistics Management Branch, Materiel Division, Installations and Logistics Department, Headquarters, Marine Corps, Washington, D.C.

A native New Yorker, Col. Berthoud has a long record of leadership in the Marine Corps and is viewed as a prospect for generalship in the near future. He was promoted to his present rank on July 1, 1974.

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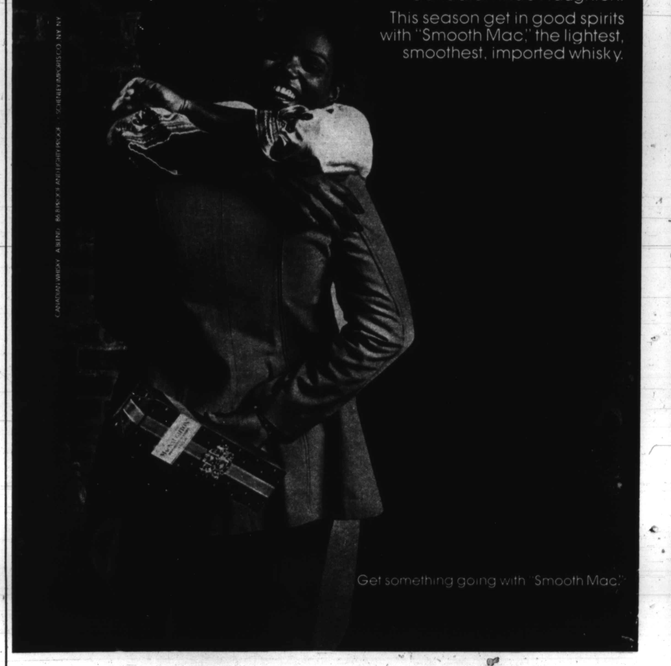

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